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Rev Saml White D.D.

Hampstead.

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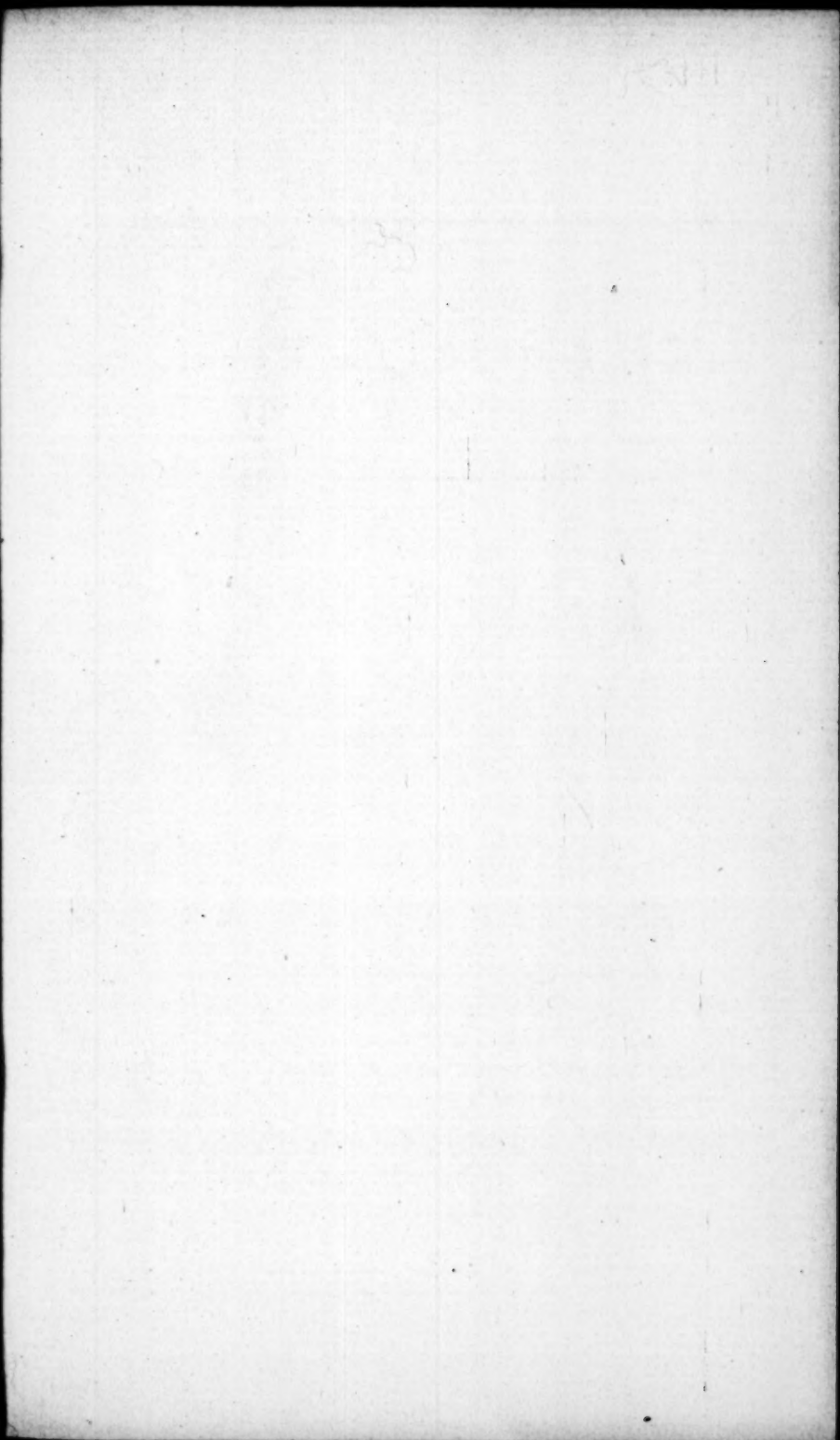
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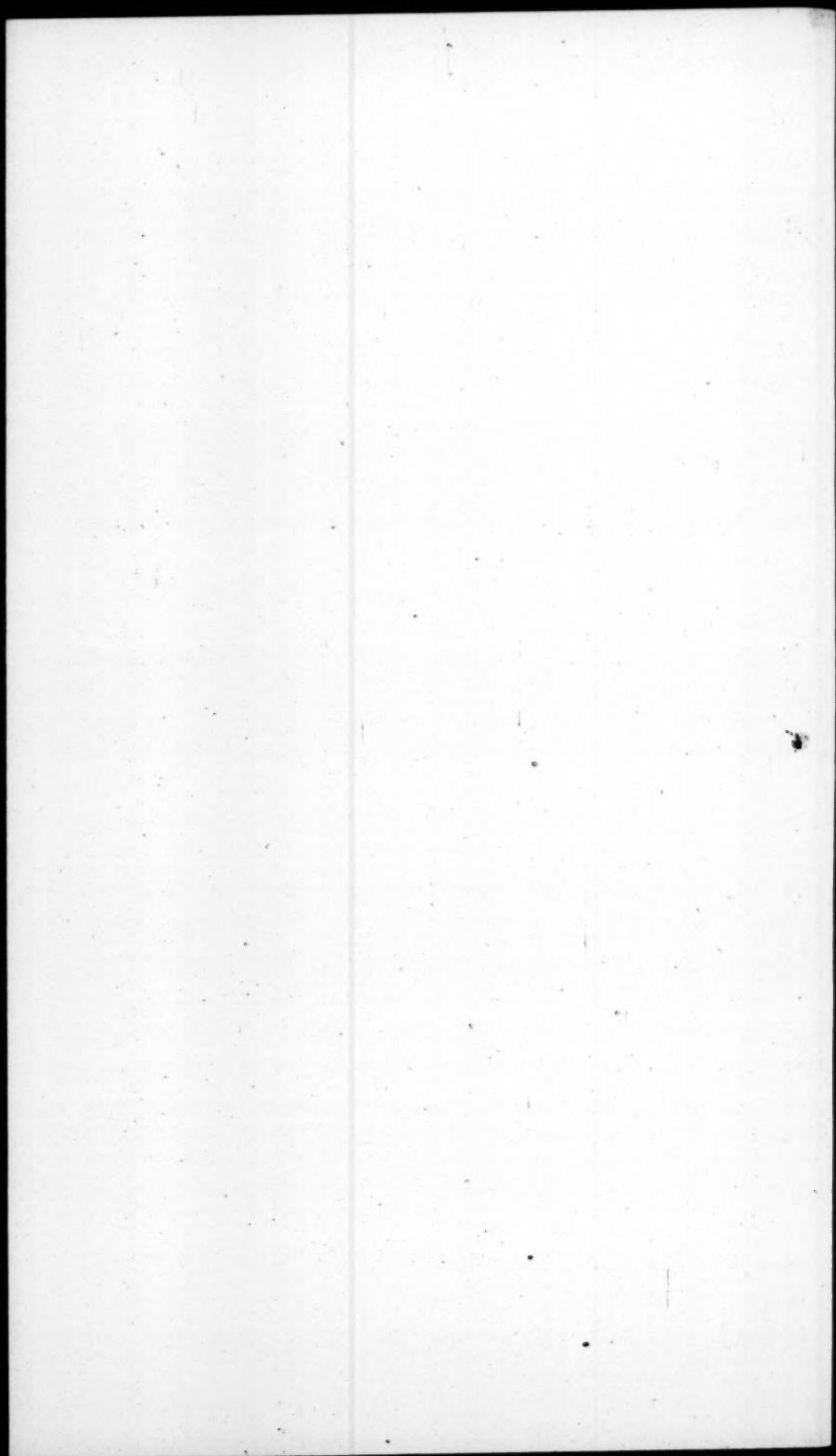
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ΚΑΙΝΗΣ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗΣ
ΔΙΑΚΟΝΙΑ:

A
DISCOURSE
OF THE

*Great and Solemn CHARGE and
OFFICE of the Ministers of
the Gospel: Collected from, and
proved by the SCRIPTURES.*

*Jesus saith, Simon, lovest thou me? He saith, Yea, Lord: And
Jesus said, Feed my Lambs. He saith a second time, Simon,
lovest thou me? He answereth, Yea, Lord: Jesus said, Feed
my Sheep. He saith a third time, Lovest thou me? Peter was
grieved: But Jesus said, Feed my Sheep, Joh. xxi. 15, 16, 17.
Who is sufficient for these Things? 2 Cor. ii. 16. I can do all
Things through Christ, who strengtheneth me, Phil. iv. 13.*

Parochial Pasturage:
OR, THE
Church of England
CLERGYMAN'S
THOUGHTS and RESOLUTIONS
Respecting his *Pastoral DUTY.*

Wrote in Imitation of the Pious Bishop *Beveridge's Religious Thoughts and Resolutions.*

Being a **SCHEME** of the Ministerial Practice, drawn from *Rules of Scripture*, and from the Example of the *Apostles* and primitive *Pastors* of the Church.

Together with an Account of the *Author's Application* of these Methods in his own *Parish*, and his Success. As also the publick *Charge* he gave himself and the *People*, on his being inducted their *Minister*.

Dedicated to the Archbishops, Bishops, and all the *English* Clergy; and humbly offer'd to their Perusal and Correction: As also to the Three great *Religious Societies* in this City; That of *Propagating Christianity* into foreign Parts, of *Promoting Christian Knowledge*, and of *Reformation of Manners*: And to the candid Consideration of all pious Christians.

By a *Presbyter* of the Church of *England*, in a
LETTER to his Friend.

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Parochial Register:
OF THE
Church of England
CLERGYMAN'S
TOWN AND PARISH OF
ST. JOHN'S, BIRMINGHAM.



...to the ...
...and ...
...the ...
...of ...
...the ...
...the ...

1. The first of these is the fact that the
 2.



To the MOST REVEREND
FATHERS IN GOD,

The Archbishops:

And to the Right Reverend FATHERS
in GOD,

*The BISHOPS of the
Church of England.*



O APOLOGY for the
Presumption of this
DEDICATION, of less
Weight than a Consciousness
of a most sincere and fervent
a Zeal

Epistle Dedicatory.

Zeal for the Glory of Almighty God, for the Dignity of the *English Church* and Clergy, and for the Safety and Happiness of Mens Souls, would be fit to be offer'd the most Learned, Pious, and Venerable Body of *Bishops* in the Christian World.

SUCH a Consciouſness I profeſs to have, and, *Moſt Venerable, and Right Venerable Fathers!* ſuch a one I promiſe my ſelf will be an Apology preferable, in Your candid Judgments, to any other I could have made.

R E-

Epistle Dedicatory.

RELING thus upon Your paternal Goodness, I proceed to give some Account of my self, and the few following Sheets.

I HAVE been ordain'd a Priest of the Church of *England* these Ten Years. About Six since I penn'd this Treatise, offering it to the Approbation of an eminent and very pious Member of our Communion, now with Christ. But I publish'd it not, till I had made Experiment of some of the proposed Methods, whether

a 2 they

Epistle Dedicatory.

they were useful, and would turn to Account, or no. Accordingly I tried, and found as many as I could practise very acceptable to the People, productive of Virtue and Piety, and reputable both to my Office and Person: I say, as many as I could practise, in that having been a Curate most of these Ten Years, and but lately benefic'd in the Church, I could do very little of what Your Lordships will find proposed in the Pages before You. I will not affirm, that all the Rules and Methods therein, were they practis'd, would be
thus

Epistle Dedicatory.

thus useful and acceptable. I recur to Your Lordships wise and pious Judgments to determine That: Which to obtain, was one great Motive to the present Dedicatory Discourse.

I HOPE that Determination will be a favourable one; and if I have Your Lordships Approbation, I may humbly hope for That also of my Honoured Brethren, the inferior Clergy. For, as I lay these Thoughts with all Resignation at Your Lordships Feet, so I most humbly offer them to their Consideration. I do not pretend

Epistle Dedicatory.

tend in the least to instruct :
That would very ill become me,
who confess my self among the
meanest, and least worthy of
my Brethren. I only lay these
Methods before them, referring
them to their Choice or Rejection,
as they find them convenient,
or not, and so approve or disapprove
of them.

UPON the Whole, if by
publishing these Propositions I
gain any thing in your Lordships
good Opinion; if thereby I
mind my Brethren of some
Methods to promote Piety, they
might not think of, and am the
Cause

Epistle Dedicatory.

Cause of their pursuing it with greater Success: If hence any Honour accrue to the Clergy, Edification to the Church, and, above all, Glory to the Divine Majesty, I attain my utmost Ambition. If I miss of these Ends, I shall endeavour to sit down somewhat, tho' the less satisfied, that they were my hearty Desire; and I hope my gracious God thro' Christ will accept of that. Him I most ardently beseech, long, very long to continue *YOU, Most Venerable and Right Venerable Fathers*, bright *STARS* of this pure Church of Christ; that
in

Epistle Dedicatory.

in Your Time all Schisms therein may be gather'd up, and Your Authority, as well as Learning and Virtue, be universally acknowledged among us. This is the sincere Prayer of,

Most Reverend,

And Right Reverend

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Fathers in God,

Your Lordships

Most Obedient Son,

And Respectful Servant,

B. H.



To the REVEREND
The CLERGY
OF THE
Church of ENGLAND,

Reverend and Honour'd Brethren!



THINK it my great Honour and Happiness that I can use this Appellation to you; and my Respect and Concern for the Interests and Reputation of our Order occasion'd my publishing the following Sheets. I believe the *English* Clergy to be a Body of Churchmen excell'd by none in the Christian World, either for Learning

b

or

EPISTLE *Recommendatory.*

or Piety: And yet you are sensible there are many who cavil and complain against us. Those who separate themselves accuse us, some that we are idle and careless, too much conform'd to the vain Pleasures and Interests of the World, which gives us Time to attend only to the common Duties of our Function: Such as Reading Prayers, Baptizing, Burying, &c. which, say they, any Child can perform; whilst we neglect the chief Work, the Conversion of our People's Souls. Others, that our only good Method towards the performing that Work, which is Preaching, is of little Use, being cold lifeless Discourses, made up, for the most Part, of Morality, and for the least, of Divinity. Others again, that tho' our Preaching be never so good, 'tis generally ineffectual, because we don't privately and particularly inspect into the State of our People's Souls, and their Improvement or Neglect of the Word preach'd.

EPISTLE *Recommendatory.*

preach'd. Moreover, some complain, that we neglect daily Family Devotions, both in our own Practice, and in our Enforcement of them on our People. More there are who object, that our Church Members generally neglect to read the holy Scriptures, and are very ignorant in them; which they impute to our Neglect of the Use of them in our Families. The Quakers, our profess'd Enemies, condemn us as meer Hirelings, and say, that the little we do is for lucre of the Fleece, rather than Good of the Flock. Now these Dissenters of all Sorts, I have observ'd, whilst they inspect into ours, to be blind to their own Faults; especially that great one of Separation, which I never found well defended by any of them. And though I know some of these Accusations to be false, all may not be so; and therefore I resolved to lay down a Scheme for doing our Duty, which kept up to might entirely stop their Mouths. Having found it

EPISTLE *Recommendatory*,

useful in my own Practice, I humbly offer the same to your serious and candid Consideration. There is no pious Man but must wish all our Dissenters would conform to the Church. We see Disputes and Arguments, tho' good ones, have prov'd ineffectual. There seems to be only one Way left to win them, *viz.* by excelling them more and more in Piety and Virtue; particularly in the Labours of our Ministerial Function. Pardon me, if I can't help believing, that were we as assiduous in these as we might, we should soon shame them out of their unreasonable Division. I pray God convince them of their Errors, and increase his Grace both in us and them: In them to unite; in us to invite them to that Union by our holy Examples. Above all, I beseech him to bless our Labours among our own People, that this evangelical Church may have evangelical Members; Members as pure and holy in their Conversations, as are the Doctrines

EPISTLE *Recommendatory.*

Doctrines preach'd to them. Then will *England* be the Glory of the Christian World, and we the *Englisb* Clergy shall shine the brightest among the Reform'd. God grant this! and that both Ministers and People may at last be crown'd with eternal Felicity with him in Heaven. I am Reverend Sirs! and by me very highly respected and beloved in the Lord Jesus,

Your Most Affectionate Brother,


And Humble Servant,

B. H.



THE

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Parochial Pasturage, &c.

I N A

LETTER to a Friend.

Dear Sir,

IT is some Years, you know, since I had sacred Orders conferr'd upon me, and was call'd to the Ministerial Function in the Church of England. I know your Goodness; as well as Learning, is such, that Treatises wrote either on Letters or Piety are acceptable to you; the latter especially are always very welcome. If you perceive the Intention only

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to

to be good, that with you atones for all other Faults, nay, that alone is no little Merit in your candid Consideration. Encourag'd by this Goodness of yours, I undertook to write a Treatise concerning the Ministerial Function; not the Nature or Excellency of it, (those have often been admirably well prov'd by learned Hands) but the various Methods, which, in my poor Judgment, confirm'd by some Experience, appear best for the Execution of it.

Before I became a Priest, which I had a desire to be very young, I had a very great Veneration for that Order. I consider'd it as honourable, because its End was the Honour of God, and the Reconciliation of him to Men; as weighty, because the eternal Happiness of many was propos'd to be gain'd by it; as delightful, because the Subjects of it were Learning, Virtue, and Piety. These were my Notions, which, I hope, Time has not a little improv'd. I next consider'd, that if the Office were so great, and excellent, my Care of executing it well ought to be somewhat suitable thereto: Consequently I look'd upon my self as oblig'd to make that Care the chief, the most constant, the most laborious of my Life. That though I might have worldly Ends and Interests to pursue, as other Men have, yet that all those ought to give room to this great and more necessary one.

Now,

Now, besides the Dignity of the Office, another great Motive provoking me wholly to give up my self to the great Work of the Ministry, was the Consideration of the Immortality of Mens Souls, and of the infinitely valuable Rewards God has propos'd to all obedient Christians, both Ministers and People. This has affected me so, that I am resolv'd all my Life long to act chiefly on the Principle of Eternity. It cannot but highly affect me to think, that if I serve God faithfully, through the Mediator Jesus, I shall be eternally happy; nay, if I turn, or carefully strive to turn many to Righteousness, I shall be eminently glorious among the Orders of that eternal Existence, *Dan. 12. 3.*

Again, it makes no small Impression on my Mind, to reflect of how inestimable a Value every human Soul is; as capable by Faith and Piety of seeing God, of living with him to endless Ages; and in serving him, of enjoying the sweetest Pleasures and highest Honours attainable by a rational Creature. On the other hand, it moves me as strongly, though not so pleasurably, to think, that Sin will make this originally divine Soul eternally miserable, will shut it out of God's Presence, change it into a diabolical Nature, and cast it into Torments with Devils, the Authors and Improvers of them. And when upon these Thoughts I begin to consider, that God has made me, the least of his Ministers, the Means, under Christ,

of making such Souls as are committed to my Charge everlastingly happy, or, by my Neglect, of suffering them to fall unwarn'd, or not duly and carefully watch'd over, from God into never-ending Misery, I have resolv'd to make this most sacred and weighty Duty, the grand Business of my Life. Hence 'tis I lay no Schemes of raising my worldly Fortune, of living at Ease, in Wealth, and Greatness. I leave all these Things to God's Disposal, without concerning my self about them. But my chief Thoughts, my Designs, my Contrivances are how for the present Time, and for the future, to secure my own Soul, and the Souls of as many as I can, in the Love and Interests of God and Heaven.

For this I am resolv'd to labour continually, preferring it to all other Aims and Satisfaction.

As I know your Piety is great, I humbly beg your most fervent Prayers to the Throne of Grace for me, that I may persevere in these Resolutions: For though I may speak big Words, yet, between you and I, I have but a faint Heart. For besides my own Corruptions, Men bold in Wickedness do oftentimes exceedingly discourage me. Indeed, my Custom is at such Times to go God, and beg his Assistance and Blessing; and then I am again encourag'd. Therefore, my Dear Friend, seeing I am thus weak and timorous, and know not how the Temptations of the World and
this

this my own Weakness may work upon me, I cannot but repeat my Request of your fervent Prayers to God for me.

But supposing his Grace prevails, and I am constant in my Practice to what I resolve in my Will, I humbly hope I may be of some Service in the Church, and bring many to Christ in my great Zeal for his, my dear Lord and Master's Glory.

To this End, I have sat down and consider'd, with all the Seriousness and Application I am Master of, which might be the most proper and likely Methods to gain upon the Wills and Affections of Men to chuse God and Salvation. I have sent you the following Account of *those* I have chosen to make use of; which, because they are for the most part new and uncommon, (yet, as I conceive, in this very degenerate and irreligious Age absolutely necessary) and may cause Distaste, as favouring of Singularity and Affectation, I humbly refer to your Correction, that I may hereafter regulate my self according to your superior Wisdom and Piety; in that I know it would be Presumption in me wholly to trust to my Judgment in the greatest Concern of my Life.

Before I enter upon my chief Design, I desire you to cast an Eye on these following Professions and Resolutions previous to it; which may take away any Prejudices my propos'd Methods might otherwise give Birth to.

1. I look upon the Church of *England* to be one of the most Evangelical in the Christian World ; and as 'tis such, I profess my self entirely devoted to it, resolving as a true Son to observe all its Canons and Injunctions, and to be constant to its Faith and Doctrines. Nor have I any Thing to complain of relating thereto, but only a Corruption of Morals in too many of its Members, and in the Practice of its Discipline.

2. I will always keep firm to it ; and, if ever beneficed therein, do nothing new in the Ministerial Office, (though I judge it never so expedient,) but by leave of my Diocesan, or other the Authority of it.

3. That in putting the following Methods in practice, I will not run wholly of my own Head, but consult some of my elder, more pious, and learned Brethren, and have their Approbation.

4. That I here protest to you, I abhor all Principles of worldly Praise, or affected Singularity ; of getting Glory to my self, or appearing more holy and deserving than my Brethren ; but that, as severe and uncommon as some of my Rules of acting may seem to be, the real Design of them is the Glory of God, and Good of Souls. Hence 'tis that
though

though I publish my Work, I conceal my Name.

5. I must beg you to believe that I do really think I shall never be able to come up to all I propose, in its full Extent; and therefore, that if in some Things I hereafter fall short, (which then you will hear of,) I entreat you would impute it not to a want of Will or ardent Desire to *do all that lies in me*, (the Charge given me at my Priestly Ordination,) for God and Mens Souls, but to the Imbecility and Backwardness of the Flesh.

6. Be pleas'd to take notice, that most of these Rules are fitted for a Country Parish, and to be put in use among the poorer and more illiterate People; other less coercive and freer Methods must be taken with the more knowing and politer Part of the World, in Towns and Cities: However, many of them are practicable both in Town and Country.

Having premised thus much, I proceed to enumerate all the Ways I have thought on to bring a Parish to general Piety; of which I now practice as many as my mean Station, little Authority, and poor Ability will permit me.

My

My Subject naturally falls into two general Divisions :

- I. Of the Duties which relate to my self.
- II. Of those I owe to the People committed to my Charge.

I. The First I subdivide as follows :

First, Of the Principles on which I act.

1st, I resolve, by the Grace of God, to do all Things *principally* for his sake, and to his Glory. I am by my Office of Priest set apart from the World to his Service : I now, in a Sense, belong no more in the World, and am not only not to terminate in it, but to have little Concern with it, more than what relates to God and his Church. To facilitate this, I desire entirely to give up my self to the Service of Heaven. In Imitation of the *Nazarites*, Prophets, *Samuel*, and *St. John Baptist*, I resolve to renounce the World, and all carnal Enjoyments, as they interfere with my most weighty and labourious Duty of caring for Souls. Consequently, in all my Actions I have an Eye to God and his spiritual Service, and let none centre in a carnal End, but the common Offices of Nature, *John* 15. 19. 1 *Chron.* 23. 13.

2^{dly}, In

The Author's Rules for Self-Conduct. 9

2dly, In Imitation of *St. Paul* I exercise my self in the Hopes of the Resurrection from the Dead; and endeavour to square my Actions, as near as I can, to the Judgment of them which I expect *Christ* to pronounce at the great Day of Accounts. I am sensible, that when I appear before the Lord of Glory, nothing will avail me but his Mercy, and my Obedience to the Terms on which 'tis offered: Which are Holiness, Faith, Self-Denial, Prayer, and especially incessant Labour in the Ministry, and diligent Care for the Salvation of Souls. Therefore I purpose to strive, to my Life's End, to form my Thoughts, Words, and Actions, as I think they will be approved or condemned at the Day of Judgment. Remembring the Words of *St. Peter*, that *Judgment must first begin at the House of God*, 1 Pet. iv. 17.

3dly, Equally, if not in a Degree superior, to the Consideration of my own safety, I act on the Principle of the Love of God. He is my dearest Father, who made me a living Soul, capable of eternal Pleasures: *Christ*, God and Man, died on my Account, and has taken Possession of Heaven for me. He has open'd and enter'd the everlasting Gates thereof, and has given me sure Hopes of entering therein after him: Therefore I will strive not only to get thither my self, but, because 'tis pleasing to my All-bounteous Lord, to perswade as many as I can to tread the same Path also. For

thus the Love of Christ constraineth us, 2 Cor. v. 14. and therefore

4thly, This is my next Principle, viz. The turning of as many as I can to Righteousness. For when I reflect on the amazing Goodness of God to me (one of the greatest of Sinners) and to all the World, I am wholly made up of Love to him: And this Love to him causes also a Love to all Mankind. I love them by Nature, and the more, because the God of Love hath so commanded me. Hence all my whole Life I intend to labour and toil, contrive and endeavour with all my Might to gain Souls to him.

O! think I, what a Happiness will it be for me, not only to have secured my own Soul, but to have been the Means of bringing Numbers of other Souls to God. How will it enhance my Bliss, to see with these very Eyes, perhaps, a whole Parish, or most of them shining in Glory, and reflect at the same time, that by the Blessing of Christ, my Care and Zeal forwarded their Salvation! Acting on this Principle, I promise my self, I can never be weary, but shall always be delighted to spend and be spent for my Fellow-Christians eternal Interest's sake; according to the Resolution of the heroic St. Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 15.

On these and such like Principles I propose to act, which that I may not deviate from, I form

Second-

Secondly, These following Rules for the ordering of my self.

1st, Thought is the Principle of all Action: Therefore, by the Grace of God I am resolved to do my Endeavour, to bring every Thought into Captivity to the Obedience of Christ, according to the Rule of St. Paul, 2 Cor. x. 5. For though the carnal Passions and Appetites in Men do very much sway the Thoughts, yet the same thinking Faculty, regulated by Piety, can make the Inclinations holy and spiritual.

Hence I endeavour to get a Habit of religious THINKING. This I take to be the first Step to Piety both of Word and Work. For if I often think upon God, I shall the more delight in him (who is inexhaustible Good) and if I habitually reflect on Piety and Virtue, I shall have no Time to consult any vain, much less vicious Objects and Enjoyments. *And I am taught thus to think from Ps cxix. 15, 48, 78. and from Matt. xii. 35. Luke vi. 45.*

2dly, WORDS are the outward Indications of Thought: Therefore I resolve that mine, as becometh a Minister of Christ, be grave, sober, and generally tending to the Improvement of Virtue and Piety. I shall say more of this under the Head of CONVERSATION.

3dly, In the Order of Decency, and in the Nature of Things, a Man's own Example ought to precede his Doctrine. He ought first to practise himself what he perswades others

12 *Rules for directing the Thoughts,*

to, and then his Arguments will have a practick Energy and Life attending them. Hence 'tis I strive that all my Actions be holy and just; as conformable to the Doctrine and Example of Christ as human Weakness will permit them; that so the People may see what I urge them to, is practicable, even by me. I am sensible all my other Endeavours are like to be vain, if my own Practice is not added. Virtue and Piety are beautiful in the Theory, but then they are Delights of the contemplative Faculty only. Now all Objects viewed only contemplatively make but weak Impressions: But when Virtue and Piety are shewn in Action, as well as Contemplation, they are sensibly and feelingly, as well as ideally reflected; and consequently are often contracted by those for whose Imitation they were practised. I have learnt by Experience, that the strict and pious Conversation of the Just has been a mighty Awe upon the Profane, and sometimes has converted them. Few wicked *Romans* would dare to do wickedly in the Presence of the Great *Cato*; and such an Awe has the Conversation of a pious Minister over his People.

'Tis storied, that among the *Greeks* a curious Set of Armour was to be made for the Statue of *Minerva*. Several Artists became Rivals for this profitable Piece of Honour. Among others, one whose Tongue was glib, and well hung, rose up, and made an eloquent Harangue, relating how exquisitely fine and
curious

curious the Work should be, were he admitted. Having finished his Oration, and wonderfully pleased the Auditory with its Eloquence, another, who was known to be the better Workman, rose up, and spoke to this Effect. *I am no Orator, nor can talk much; but all that this Man has talked of I can prove myself able to do, by Works which I have already perform'd.* This Appeal to Experience won him the Day.

Now, the Ministers Office includes what both these Men did. They must talk, that is, preach well, and perform what they preach. This, God's Grace assisting, I will do. For the revealed Will of God is, that the Pastors of the New Covenant, in their Practice, *be good Examples to their Flocks*, 2 Pet. v. 3.

4thly, I go on to private personal Duties. The chief of these is to get a Habit of Prayer.

It is impossible he should be a good Christian, much less a pious Minister, who cannot pray. I speak now of private Devotion; and of that, as an habitual Frame of Spirit, willing and ready, as far as human Frailty will suffer, at all times to lift up it self in holy Thought to God, either of Petition or Praise. The Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Apostles of Christ are Examples of this Habit of Grace, *Acts i. 14.* But *Acts vi. 4.* proves undeniably, that Christ's Ministers are to be *given up to this Duty.* It is the great Business of their Lives. For say the TWELVE to the Church,

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14 *Resolutions to give good Example.*

we will give our selves continually to Prayer, and to the Ministry of the Word.

All Christians are to pray daily; but this Duty is incumbent on us Ministers, more than any. For they are to pray continually for God's Church, and especially for their own Flock therein. It is Sin in them, if they are not constant Appliers to the Throne of Grace for them, 1 Sam. xii. 23. 2 Theff. i. 11. Col. i. 9. Therefore I set apart a Time every Day, to pray for the Soul; committed to my Charge, and to study their spiritual Good; how to make them more pious, and bring them nigher to God.

5thly, But as Prayers are fruitless without joining Action, so I resolve continually more and more to abstract my self from Flesh and Sense, and to live the spiritual and intellectual Life.

A Minister ought to be very active and spiritous. His Calling referring to the Soul, should make him more of Spirit than Body, and Intelligence than Sense. To this End

6thly, I propose to live very abstemiously; To feed upon the most plain and simple Food, and of that in moderate Quantities; never to allow my self above six Hours Sleep. For every Priest is a spiritual Watchman, and cannot be so, unless he is very careful and vigilant. Every Christian is a Soldier, but the Priest an Officer of Christ. In military Affairs, Commanders are, or should be, expert, spright;

Resolutions concerning Temperance. 15

spirightly, and a ready Guard to those they command. So in the Christian Warfare, the Enemies of the Souls, both of the Pastor and his Flock, are in perpetual Motion and Vigilance to destroy. Therefore, as much as possible, so should the Priests to guard both themselves and their People, *Ezek. iii. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 5. Heb. xiii. 17.*

Nothing is a greater Enemy to Watchfulness, than intemperate Drinking, the great Vice of the northern Parts of the World. Therefore I resolve to keep my Soul pure from the Fumes and Pollutions of strong Liquors. I am sensible, that the Soul of a Divine ought to resemble the Flame kept up continually in the Lamps of the Jewish Sanctuary, *i. e.* always light, with pure, holy, rational Love to God. Intoxicating Liquors extinguish this celestial Flame: Intemperance unfits us for spiritual Duties, and any Communion with God. Hence I resolve to be very cautious in the Use of Meats and Drinks, that I may preserve my Reason constantly clear and unpolluted, *Levit. x. 9. 1 Tim. iii. 2. 8.*

7thly, Time being the *Medium* of all Opportunity and Action, I intend to make the best and most pious Use I can of it. Having renounc'd the World, I shall spend very few of my Hours in its Diversions. I am naturally given to Solitude, and am thoroughly wean'd from the Charms of all Conversation, but that whose Subjects are Virtue, Religion, the
Love

Love and Service of God, and Good of Men's immortal Souls. So that if I keep up to this Resolution, most of my Time will be spent either in Study, publick and private Prayer, Conversation with my pious Brethren of the Clergy, or with my Parishioners about their spiritual Progress and Welfare. 'Tis a sad Mistake which some Novices lye under, that a Clergyman, being a Gentleman, has the Privilege of indulging his Appetites as much as any other Person; of tasting the Pleasures, and following the Diversions of this Life as freely. Hence it is, that some unwary Persons of our Profession are drawn in by vicious and carnal Company, to give themselves up to foolish Vanities, to frequent Publick Houses with little or no Reserve, and live like worldly Gentlemen indeed, in sensual Pleasures, being all this while dead to Spirituality, and the things of God. I confess, dear Friend, with Blushes, that I have been too often drawn away by such Incitements, but resolve for the future to keep a stricter Guard upon my self.

Again, others make it necessary, that a Clergyman, to maintain the Character of a Gentleman, do carry it haughtily and superciliously among the common People; and some led by this false Doctrine, have so carried themselves as to render their Persons, and which was much worse, their Function hated and despised.

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His Family-Duties. He the Light of it. 17

I am of very different Sentiments, and think a Divine ought to be the meekest and humblest of all Men; even like *St. Paul*, All things to All; that is, condescending to All, that he might gain some; which by a prudent Man may be done, without debasing himself, and with observing a Distance suitable to the spiritual Dignity of his Profession. After this Manner I propose and hope to be able to demean my self. *For thus Christ's Ministers are taught to be, Matt. x. 16. 1 Cor. ix. 19, 20, 21, 22.*

III. Of DUTIES relating to my Family, and publick Conversation in the World.

A Minister is set to be the spiritual Lamp or Light of his whole Parish: Therefore his LIGHT of Piety should be every way so illustrious, as to direct them to every Christian Grace and Virtue. Of Consequence it behoves him to take great Care of his own Conduct, and to be prudent in the Government of those that live with him. Hence

1. I resolve that, as far as I can judge, none shall live with me but such as are devout and holy, as well as honest and faithful. I intend to enquire far and near for such, preferring them before all others; and having found them really virtuous, pious Persons, resolve to en-
dear them by all the engaging Ways I can think of, so to continue.

2. To encrease Goodness in them, I will inure them to the Service of Almighty God,

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18 *The Author's Resolves concerning Servants,*

by having divine Service said twice every Day in my Family, with a short Thanksgiving after Dinner, consisting of a few Prayers and an Hymn. My Method of Family-Devotions shall be this. If there are Prayers said in the Church daily, all that can be spared shall be constantly present at them: And if there are, or are not, every Morning and Evening I will call them together to assist at Devotions of my own composing, which may reach the particular Necessities and Circumstances of my Parish and Family. For I am of Opinion, our excellent Common-Prayer was never designed for any other Place than the Church; nor excepting Priests and Deacons, that any private Persons or Families ought to presume to use it elsewhere. *Pious K. David is an Example to us of daily constant Devotion, when he cries out, Psal. lv. 18. In the Evening, Morning, and at Noon-Day will I pray, and that instantly, and he shall hear my Voice.*

3. I resolve to keep up to the old pious Custom of our Forefathers, even in the Roman Catholick Times, of suffering Servants to leave Work at *Saturday Noon*, and have the rest of the Day both for natural and spiritual Recreation. The Evening I intend to set apart for Family Catechism, or Examinations of their Progress both in religious Knowledge and Practice.

Sunday Mornings I will take Care that they rise sooner than on any other; and the first thing

thing I will do, is to join with them in sacred Hymns to glorify God, for the Resurrection of Jesus, and his new Creation of our Souls in Holiness and Righteousness, began, as on this Day. The Evenings shall be spent in pious Discourses, and Recapitulations of the Word preach'd; that it may be the firmer engrafted in their Minds the following Week. I intend to bring up one excellent Custom in my Family, which has been very piously enjoin'd in some Colleges of our Universities, that at Dinner a Servant shall read a Portion of the Holy Scriptures, which may be the happy Subject of our Table Conversation. *Fridays and Sundays* this shall be constantly done. Thus St. Paul from God is instant *that the divine Word should dwell richly in us in all Wisdom, teaching each other in Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing with Grace in our Hearts to the Lord, Col. iii. 16.*

† I propose to take Care, and give my Servants a good Example in all the Offices of a private Life; and I will strive to attract their Love to me by Kindness and Good-will to them. If any one serves me five or seven Years faithfully, and in the Fear of God, that Person shall have a good Sum at Parting, besides his ordinary Wages, towards the better Maintenance of a Family, if he is like to have such; or the setting him up in any Trade or Profession he is inclined to. I will observe the same Method among the Women Servants.

20 *Kindness to good Servants. Its Motives.*

And here I cannot but admire this Piece of Generosity is not often practised by Christian Masters and Mistresses. Certainly none deserve greater Rewards than faithful Servants, and we are admonished in Scripture to be very kind and obliging to them.

Nor will I be less loving to their Souls than their worldly Interests; for I will take Care that every one who lives with me be able to read, and, as far as is necessary for their Condition, understand the Scriptures: Besides which, I will bestow on them all Sorts of good Books, suitable to their Capacitie, at my own Charge, *Coloss. iv. 1.*

5. I will distinguish my Favours to them proportionable to their Virtue and Piety: Those whom I perceive to be most diligent in the Service of God, shall be most regarded and rewarded by me. *For this all in Authority are taught to do, from Psal. ci. throughout; and particularly ver. 4, 6.*

6. If I live nigh the Church, I will constantly read Morning and Evening Prayers therein. If in a Town, tho' there were no such Custom before, I will certainly introduce it. If I am fix'd in the Country, and the Parish Church is far from my Dwelling, and there are few or no Houses nigh it, 'twill not be practicable to have daily Prayers therein: But then, if there are any competent Number of Houses nigh me, I intend to set up a Bell in my own, by which to call the Neighbours,

Of Family-Prayers and Conversation. 21

if they are so disposed, to the set Times of Prayers there. Also they shall have the Privilege of being present at any other Devotions, or spiritual Exercises perform'd in my Family. *A Pastor's Parish may be called in a spiritual sense his House and family; and therefore he should take Care with Joshua, that whatever others do, HE and THEY may serve the Lord,* Joshua xxvi 15.

7. My daily Conversation either at Home or Abroad, as becometh a Minister of the Gospel, shall consist chiefly of divine and spiritual Subjects. And because pious things themselves may weary, being very often inculcated, I will study to take off that Distaste, by making them pleasant and entertaining; as by mixing History with them, and introducing them by way of Parable and Allegory, &c. It is the great Art of a Minister (as *Laco* the Philosopher said 'twas of a Schoolmaster) *πὶ γὰρ ἀ ἡδεῖα ποιεῖν*, to make virtuous and honest things sweet and delightful. *We have eternal Wisdom, the divine Λόγος for an Example of this Practice, who endeavoured Mens Conversion by Parables and Allegories.* See Mat. xiii. 3. 31 Luke xvi. 19. and many other Places in the Gospels.

II. OF PAROCHIAL DUTIES to be performed to the People.

These are of two Sorts. 1. Those private and personal, respecting every Parishoner, and Family among them, and their Conversations.

22 *Parochial Duties. Knowledge of the People.*

tions. 2. Those publick, commonly call'd Church Duties or Offices.

I. Of private and personal Duties.

1. The first Thing of Course a Minister is to do, is to KNOW his People. Every one, I suppose, has a List of their Names, as well as an Account of the Value of their Tithes. Besides these, I intend to have another List, in which to set down, as far as human Search and Knowledge will inform, the Condition of their Souls. Of which Method more presently. I say, the first Thing to be done by us, is to know our People well, or, I am convinc'd we can do them little good. We must understand their Way of Living, their worldly Condition, their Dispositions of Mind, their former and present Conversation. To this End I propose

2. At my first coming, to conceal my Design of being so curious and particular in my Care of their Souls, and for some time, only to do the common publick Duties; still striving to gain their Love and Esteem by all the good Offices I am capable of obliging them with. For the Love and Respect of a Parish towards its Minister is the Foundation, without which their Edification in Piety can hardly be carried on. Whilst these things are in Agitation, I propose secretly to be studying in the Parish; and that perfectly known, then to begin to deal more particularly with them, both in private

vate and publick, according to their several Inclinations and Conditions of Mind.

3. To come to such a Knowledge of the People, as is necessary for their spiritual Safety and Improvement, I propose to pick out some Parishoner of undoubted Probity and Piety, whom I will engage to Secrecy, to give me a particular Account of every Person in the Parish, in respect of his Morals and religious Qualifications.

4. This done, I intend to begin my great and most useful Work of all, in which I take the Office of a Pastor of Souls chiefly to consist, *viz.* OF SEARCHING INTO THE CONDITION OF HIS PEOPLE'S SOULS; AND LABOURING TO KNOW HOW IT IS WITH THEM IN RESPECT OF THEIR HEAVENLY INTERESTS: THAT IS, WHETHER THEY ARE IN A STATE OF NATURE OR GRACE, OF CONDEMNATION OR SALVATION. Thus our Lord searched the Soul of the young rich Man in the Gospel, and learnt him how mistaken he was of his spiritual Condition, when he told him, — *One thing lackest thou yet*, Mark x. 21. Indeed Christ God-Man knew the Secrets of the Soul within. We must try and judge by Mens Words and Actions. Our Saviour describing the Pastoral Office wrote for our Instruction who are Pastors from him, says, *I am the good Shepherd, and know my Sheep, and am known of mine*, John x. 14. and ver. 27. *My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* More particularly

24 *Of Inspection into Mens spiritual State:*

ver. 2. He declareth it a Part of the spiritual Shepherd's Office, to know his Sheep in an especial Manner, saying of him, that He *cal-leth his own Sheep BY NAME, and leadeth them out; and when he putteth forth his own Sheep, he goeth before them, and the Sheep follow him, for they know his Voice.* Jesus our great High-Priest is our Example in the Ministerial Office, which is here described in a most divine and pathetic Manner.

I have composed an *Examen* or Test, whereby to search into the spiritual Estate of the poorer and more illiterate Parishoners, whose Ignorance in the Religion they profess I have found to be surprizingly great. I give you this *Compendium* of it.

I begin with their religious Belief and Knowledge. As, of their Apprehensions of the Nature of God; their Notions of the Tri-Unity; of the Fall, and Original Sin; of that Actual; of Baptism, its Privileges and Obligations; of Repentance, particularly of repenting in time of Health; of a Change in Act, as well as Will and Desire, and of a Death-bed Repentance; of Faith and Works; that is, of Holiness and Reference to God's Mercy in Christ being together essential to Salvation: Of Prayer, the Sacraments, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell: Of Christ's Humanity in the Flesh; how they understand him God-Man; how as satisfying for the Sins of Mankind on the Cross, and mediating for them now in Heaven. Of
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Regeneration, or a State of Grace, their Notion of, and Progress in it.

These and such like religious Principles of Christian Knowledge and Belief I am determined to enquire into; of which I have experienc'd, most of the common People, that I have had any thing to do with, very ignorant.

If any well-disposed Parishoner (as I shall be often exhorting them to do) comes and desires my Opinion of his spiritual Condition, and my Directions for his Improvement in Piety, I begin with these and such like Queries.

Do you believe you are in a State of Wrath or Grace? What are your Evidences that you are a true Penitent? Do you live in any known Sin? (Here if by my former Enquiries about them, unknown to 'em, I find they are hypocritical, I shall detect and reprove them) How long have you left off such or such an evil Course? Do you delight to pray to God? Are you constant to your Devotions? Can you read? Do you daily read and meditate on the Holy Scriptures? Are you in Love and Charity with all the World? Do you live justly? Are you so in your Dealings? And do you not live in Debts you can pay? What is the chief End you propose of your Life? Do you do all things, as near as you can, to please God, or the World and your self? Give Instances: What have you ever done for God or Religion? In what denied your self for Christ? In what taken up his Cross, as he hath commanded all

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Christians? Do you trust in God for Help in all your Concerns, or wholly rely on the Arm of Flesh, and human Means? Do you examine into the spiritual Condition of your Children and Servants? Have you received, or why don't you receive the holy Sacrament? Do you find your self improv'd in Grace after Communicating? Have you devoted your self to God? Do you think you are fit to die, if God should call you? What good Books have you? Have all your Family Bibles and Common-Prayer-Books?

I have also compos'd proper Queries, Instructions, and Advice, for every State, Condition and Circumstance of Life: For the Healthy and Sickly; the Young and Old; Single and Married; for Children and the Ancient; for Husbandmen and Tradesmen; upon Marriage, Death of Friends, Losses, sudden good Fortune, Injuries done or received, good Actions perform'd, Recovery from Danger or Sickness; on Sin committed, Quarrels engaged in, Law-suits commenc'd, or like to be so, &c.

I have also a particular *Examen* for the Sick: As, What was the Condition of your Soul, when you was first taken? Does nothing trouble your Mind? Are you sure, the Love and Prevalence of no wilful Sin is lurking there, which you have not overcome? Are you entirely resign'd to God's Will, whether for Life or Death? Did you live in universal Charity? Are your worldly Affairs settled?

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Do you desire to receive the Holy Sacrament, &c.

If the sick Person be rich, I propose to press Acts of Charity; especially to the Ornament of the Parish-Church, if any thing necessary be wanting there; and to the Poor.

I have drawn up a Description of the two States of the Soul, that of Nature and Grace, according to the Characters the Scriptures give them. Now, because some may not like, nor admit my private Searches and Examinations of their spiritual Conditions; and others may give me false Accounts thereof; I think it proper to make such a System of the two States of the Soul publick, and disperse it throughout the Parish; that so every one may be able to judge of, and examine himself.

These, and such like, are the Methods I shall take to search into the Condition of every Soul over whom I am appointed Pastor. In doing which I know there must be great Troubles, and many Difficulties and Discouragements to be encounter'd and overcome: But when I consider the great Service this will be both to me the Minister, and my People ministered to; how effectual for reforming the Wicked, confirm^g the Weak, and establishing All in the Practice of Piety and Virtue, the Thoughts of these threatening Hardships vanish, and I am strengthened in my Resolutions of coping with them, be they never so many, or so great.

I am aware, however, of three Objections against such a singular and strict Manner of dealing with Mens Souls.

1. *Objection.* That this private Examining will not have its designed Effect, as favouring too much of Arrogancy and Lordship over Mens Consciences.

To this I answer, That I shall do nothing of this kind by way of Threat or Ruggedness; but my Enquiries and Admonitions shall be offer'd with all the Humility and Tenderness can be expected, except when the Persons are very wicked and obstinate: And I will take great Care not to be inquisitive in any other of their Affairs, but those of Religion.

2. *Objection.* That the *English* particularly are of a nice Disposition, not suffering Restraint; and if press'd upon too much, instead of becoming better, resent the Admonition, and grow worse: Therefore, that a general and hearty Perswasion will sooner win them.

I own the Weight of this Objection, and therefore grant my *Examens* to be fitted, for the most Part, to the Capacities of the Common and Illiterate. I propose more delicate Methods for the better and more ingenuous Part of Mankind.

3. *Objection.* That publick Preaching is the best, the most generous and likely Method of winning Souls to God.

I answer, That it is so, supposing you to have an Insight into the Inclinations and Morals

Publick Preaching why generally ineffectual. 29

als of your Auditory first, else you shoot but at random. Therefore the Use of private Conference is enjoined us at our Ordination, that we may fit and prepare our People for Sermons, and also know what Doctrines are most suitable to enforce on them. We see how ineffectual Preaching is now-a-days, to reform an Age that grows more and more vicious and profane; which is the greater Surprize to consider, in that no former Times have surpass'd, scarce have equall'd these, for pious, eloquent, and learned Preachers. Therefore we see something is wanting to render publick Preaching more useful and successful; and this, as I observ'd before, I take to be a personal Insight into, and Knowledge of the Hearers: A Knowledge of their Tempers and Dispositions, their Manner of Life and Conversation.

Upon the Whole: As I think this Way of dealing with Men necessary to bring about the great Ends of Conversion and Grace, and make them general in my Parish; so I know 'tis also equally necessary to use the Means with the greatest Caution and Prudence. Hence I propose to study the most proper Times for offering these private Conferences, and the best Manner of rendring them acceptable. I shall approach the Rich and the Great with Humility, and the Ignorant and Poor with Tenderness and Respect; professing to both Sorts a sincere Love, and passionate Concern for their Salvation; the Truth of which I hope

30 *Of visiting the People as a Pastor.*

I hope to demonstrate in all my Actions and Demeanour towards them. *Thus the zealous Apostle Paul went from House to House, exhorting, entreating, rebuking with Earnestness and Tears, and no doubt examining into the State of their Souls, Acts xx. 20, 31.*

5. Order and Perseverance is the Life of every good Work. For this Reason, I will set apart particular Times and Days for these private Visits and Conferences. The meaner Sort I intend to send for at proper Seasons; and to wait upon the others. Nor can I think this a demeaning my self, since the Great *St. Paul* disdain'd not to go from House to House, and converse with the *Ephesians*, about their spiritual Affairs, *Acts xx. 20.* I will, by God's Grace, be constant to this Duty as long as I live, knowing there will be a lasting Necessity for it. A Minister's is an *Herculean* Labour; his Work ends not but with his Life, in that new Objects of his Care continually offer themselves.

6. To the End I may know the Success of my Ministry from time to time, I will keep a Register by me of all my Parishoners, having at each Name an Account of their present spiritual Condition, their Improvement or Deficiency in their Duty, and my Progress with them; and according as I find them, deal with 'em, in Doctrine, Exhortation, Rebuke, Commendation, and all the other Parts of my Duty towards them.

7. But

7. But as no Instructions are like to avail the People, except they have the Means of improving in them, I will be sure to take Care, that every Person and Family in my Parish be taught to read the Scriptures in their Mother Tongue; excepting only those very aged People who are hardly capable of being taught.

To this End I will procure a Person to go to their House in the Evenings, who are unfit to be taught in a publick Way; or else those that will come to me, I will teach my self.

As to the Youth, there shall not one be neglected, but all that will, one way or other, shall be taught to read. For, I beseech you, Dear Sir, is it probable Christians should either know or practise their Duty well, who are ignorant of all Letters? It is possible indeed, because every thing is so to the inspiring Grace of God. But otherwise, and ordinarily speaking, they must needs be in a very sad and deplorable Case, who cannot go to those Wellsprings of heavenly Life and Knowledge as oft as they want, are weak or thirsty, and be refreshed. Besides, God's Word is so very necessary whereby to get a Stock of spiritual Ideas, Language, and Desires, whereby to improve in the divine Duties of Prayer and Meditation; whereby to know the Will, the Providence, and Love of God; whereby to learn exactly the Threats to deter our Disobedience, and gracious Promises to provoke our Obedience; wherein to read the *very Words* of
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32 *Of enabling them to read the Scriptures.*

our dear Saviour, the Lord Jesus, and his amazing Tendernels to our weak Natures; wherewith to comfort us in our Hours of Affliction, and moderate our Passions in those of Prosperity; with innumerable other such religious Privileges, that I cannot but think it my Duty to endeavour to the utmost of my Power, that every Soul under my Care have the Privilege of consulting it, and making the proper Uses of it which they ought.

8. Over and above the Scriptures, the reading of good Books is very requisite; and as they are often Comments upon the Scriptures, I may add, necessary: Therefore I propose to take Care, that every Parishoner of mine (besides a Bible and Common-Prayer-Book, indispensably necessary to All) have a competent Number of pious and useful Books, which I will direct them in the Choice of, and, if poor, freely give them. And here I cannot but call to Mind, and thank your pious Care, in procuring One Hundred and Fifty religious Treatises, from the *Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*, for the Use of my present Cure, which I have dispersed throughout it, and hope the charitable Persons who gave them will have the Satisfaction in time to hear of the great Good their Generosity has done; as I doubt not but their Piety will be rewarded gloriously by Almighty God. And I resolve, by the Grace of God, not to rest, till I have brought my Parish in general to a strong Knowledge

ledge in the Faith of Christ, and of the System of Christianity; that so the Word of our Lord may dwell in them richly, in all Wisdom; that they may be mighty in the Scriptures, and able to render a Reason of the Hope that is in them; to all that ask them, *Col. iii. 16.*

9. But forasmuch as the common People, tho' they read the Scriptures never so diligently, may meet with Passages therein necessary for them to know, but too hard for them to understand; all which cannot be explain'd in publick Preaching: I determine to form a Society of some of the Parish (the Youth especially) who shall meet at proper Times in my own House, where we will go through the whole Body of Scripture, and make such Comments in our Reading, as shall serve best to improve both our Understanding and Practice in religious Matters. I will give these Persons good Books to read, prepare them, as Candidates, for the holy Sacrament, and observe their Proficiency in divine Knowledge. I have, for some time, form'd such a Society in this Cure, and have heard that several of my pious Brethren of the Church of *England* have done the same with good Success. Thus *St. Luke* extolls the Bereans, calling them **NOBLE**, because they met DAILY to search the Scriptures, that they might be convinc'd of, and confirm'd in their divine Authority, and Confirmation of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, *Acts xvii. 11.*

34 *The Author's Resolution to love his Flock:*

10. In my Notion of things, I think it impossible for a pious Minister, not to have an entire Love for his Parish, because he has his Bread from them; and far more, because they are his Brethren, or rather Children in Christ, and by his Blood, Heirs of Heaven as well as himself. I am convinc'd, every Priest ought to esteem and behave himself as a Father to his People, shewing in all things his paternal Care and Love for them. I desire, in a particular manner, to demonstrate this, by striving to form them an holy People, dedicated to God, and getting them the Reputation among Men, of an honest, pious, devout, and knowing Parish: In which Graces I shall be ambitious to have them distinguish'd from the Generality of the wicked World. *That Pastors owe the purest Love to their Flocks, we learn from St. Paul. How affectionate is his Style to the Philippians, when he thus writeth? My Brethren, dearly beloved, and longed for, my Joy and my Crown, stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. Then again to the Thessalonians, What, saith he, is our Hope, or Joy, or Crown of rejoicing, are not even ye? Ye are our Glory and Joy, Phil. iv. 1. 1 Thess. iii. 19.*

11. Again, to demonstrate my Love to my People, I will abound in all the Acts of Charity I possibly can; even to the very utmost my Circumstances can afford. If any Man want Money, I will furnish him with as much as I am able, without Interest. . If he fails in his

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To be kind to their Souls and Bodies. 35

Business, I will strive to set him in some good Way again, or get him Friends to do it. So on all other Occasions, I will endeavour to be their Friend in their worldly Concerns. To this End I am resolv'd to study hard all my Life, and propose to get Money by some Tracts in religious and other Learning, which I intend to publish to the World; in that my spiritual Preferment perhaps may not capacitate me to be so kind and generous to all good Christians as I desire to be. *God is good to all the World, Christ fed Thousands, pitied and help'd the Poor; certainly then the Pastors of his Church should be charitable to their Power. Christ saith, the good Shepherd will lay down his Life for his Sheep; if Life, sure a little of the World's Mammon to help them. But the Hireling loveth the Wages, not the Flock, because he is an Hireling,* John x. 11, 12.

12. Thus will I strive to be every way beneficent and helpful to the Poor. They shall always find a Welcome at my House; not at the Door, but within, in a Place appointed for them. I loath the treating these dear Souls with Contempt, whom Christ died for; and, who, being friendless, ought to be regarded and assisted the more. I propose to provide a Dinner every *Sunday* for as many of the Poor of my Parish, as I can afford; and so by feeding their Bodies, and raising in them chearful Spirits, fit 'em the better for God's publick Service, that with glad and thankful Hearts they

may praise him who graciously chuseth the poor and despised of this World, to be the Partakers and Favourites of his heavenly Kingdom. *Sad it is to consider how low Christianity is in the World, and how few calling themselves Christians, have the Spirit of Christ, of which let this Instance serve instead of many: That Christians, when they make Feasts, call their rich Neighbours Friends, &c. but not the Poor. But Christ commanded us not to call rich Neighbours or Friends, (i. e. not mostly, or always,) who can invite us again, but the poor, maim'd, halt and blind. who cannot recompense us, and need not; for if we do thus we shall be recompensed an Hundred Fold of Almighty God at the Resurrection of the Just, Luke xiv. 12, 13, 14.*

13. As I will be a Friend to all that fear God; so the poor Man that does so, shall be very eminently distinguish'd by me. I will carefs him, set him at my right Hand; will visit him, live he never so mean, and shew him all publick Respect, that every one may see, I love those best, whoever they are, who best love God.

14. If there be Men in my Parish of Riches and noble Birth, I will endeavour, by all the just ways of Respect and Service to gain their Favour, knowing what great Good such can do, if they please, to the Cause of Virtue and Piety. I shall take Care not to be offensive to such in any thing whatever. Even in my spiritual Office, which I will impartially execute both

both towards Rich and Poor, I hope to take such humble and endearing Methods as shall be offensive to none but the designedly and incorrigibly impious. I shall do my utmost to provoke the Rich to Acts of Generosity to the Church and the Poor, as well as to exemplary Piety in themselves; remembering them how greatly, if they please, they can glorify God, by discountenancing Vice, and encouraging Virtue and Holiness, and making Use of all their Authority, and much of their Wealth to these pious Purposes. In particular, I will humbly advise them to employ and favour the industrious and virtuous most; and to take those into their Service, before such vile Rake-hells and impious Wretches as too often are attendant on the Great; tho' it may be their Masters are ignorant of their Servants Vices. Good or wicked Servants are a great Blessing or Mischief often to a whole Family; therefore I shall do the Masters, within our Limits, this good Office, of giving them Notice how their Servants behave themselves when not under their Eye; that they may encourage or reprehend, continue or dismiss them accordingly. *According to Psal. ci. ver. 4, 6, &c.*

15. Since I know it to be my indispensable Duty to stand up boldly for the Honour of Religion and Almighty God, I am resolv'd, his Grace inspiring and assisting me, to be the utter and irreconcilable Enemy of Sin, both in my self and others, at all Times, and upon all

38 *To be zealous against Sin. Not to fear Men.*

all Occasions. In whom, or howsoever guarded Vice appears, I will oppose it, and without Respect of Persons, rebuke the Authors or Abettors of it. For I am perswaded, that all Christians, but especially all Christian Ministers, are obliged to speak the Truth constantly, boldly rebuke Vice, and patiently suffer for the Truth's sake, if call'd thereto; as the Church piously commands us to pray to God we may. *Collect for St. John Baptist. See St. Paul's Description of the Corinthians Zeal in this Matter, 2 Cor. vii.*

16. But as Men are to be dealt with after that Manner as may serve best to reclaim them, I shall use all the proper Ways I can think of, to bring about that End. In my Reproofs I will humble my self to the Lofly and Great, be sharp to the Presumptuous; meek, gentle, and full of Entreaty (as there is Occasion) to All: And I hope, that when Men see I am purely disinterested from any worldly Consideration whatever, and rebuke them principally, to win them to Piety and eternal Glory, they will not take it ill, but close in with my Entreaties, and be reform'd. *This was the Great Apostle of the Gentiles Method: He was All things to all Men, that he might win some. O what hard Heart, but must be moved with a Sense of his divine Charity thus express'd! Though I be free from all Men, yet have I made my self Servant of all, that I gain the more. To the Jews I became as a Jew; to them under the*

the Law, as under the Law; to them without Law; as without Law; to the weak, became I as weak, 1 Cor. ix. 19. And again, Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? 2 Cor. xi. 29.

17. When I see that publick Preaching won't reclaim a Sinner, I will take a Time to add private Warning and Entreaty in the most solemn and pressing Manner; demonstrating the horrid Nature of Sin, and the terrible Danger of living in it under the Wrath of an Omnipotent, Just, and Jealous God, &c.

18. If this won't do, or if I judge personal Reproof like to be unprofitable, (and I have experienc'd, that some Men cannot bear, others give a deaf Ear to it,) then I will write Letters secretly, as from a Friend, so that the Person shall not know from whence they come. The Style of these shall be such as I think most likely to work Good upon them; either plain, pointing directly at the Person and his Sin; or else in Similitude, representing him under some other Person and Character, (as *Nathan* treated *David*;) or historical, relating the Passages of his Life, enumerating God's Mercies, and his Sins and Provocations so lively, that he cannot but see and reflect upon himself and his Actions pourtraited after this Manner. I once tried this Method, and it made a very strong Impression on the Person, and I have Hopes it will reclaim him. The Letter was to this Effect.

“ John

40 *Methods of convincing notorious Sinners.*

“ *John Gastelli* was born of an ancient and
“ creditable Family. His Father gave him a
“ liberal Education, and he was the growing
“ Hopes of that illustrious Name. How un-
“ fortunate was it, that such good Parts, and
“ so happy a Genius, should be sullied by Vice,
“ and led away by such base Companions.
“ God’s Favours were very signal in removing
“ two Brothers, that he might come to a very
“ plentiful Fortune. How beloved and re-
“ spected would this Person be, would he
“ turn to the right Way, the Way of Sobriety
“ and Virtue. But, alas! he is blind; blind
“ to the Danger his Vices bring upon his
“ worldly Interest he so much doats upon, and
“ to his eternal he so greatly neglects and
“ contemns. (——— Here I mention some
great Merits he had received, some great Sins
he had committed, and some Reflections that
were made on him even by Persons as wicked
as himself) “ I send you this History for your
“ Entertainment and Use. We are to take
“ Examples by others, and to admire the E-
“ vents of Virtue and Vice, of Wisdom and
“ Folly in Mankind; and as Reflections on
“ others good or bad Conduct, in the Variety
“ of their History cannot but be entertaining;
“ so if we imitate the better of their Choice,
“ it will be good and profitable for us in our
“ Manner of Life, and the Conduct there-
“ of, &c.” *Now if such a remote Manner of*
Reproof

The Incurrible to be publicly rebuked. 41

Reproof won't affect the Sinner, we must come directly in Person, and say with the Prophet Nathan, Thou art the Man, 2 Sam. xii. 7.

19. As I will favour and respect the Pious; so when all other Methods of Love and Gentleness have in vain been tried on the Wicked; I will use such with Severity and Contempt: I will turn my Back on the greatest wicked Man, (incurribly and maliciously so,) and prefer the good poor Man, whom he despises, to his Face. I think it in some Cases my Duty to rebuke obstinate Sinners openly; that others may fear. *This is our express Duty from Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Tim. v. 20.* But because this often exasperates; I will do what secret Kindnesses I can to such Persons at the same Time; that they may see all I do is out of pure Love to them. But if they are altogether harden'd and irreclaimable, I will strive, if it be practicable, to rid the Parish of them; that their evil Example may no more offend and corrupt it. However, before I come to this Extremity, I will strive by Presents, and other Favours, by getting Friends, Money, and Interest for them; to win Sinners to God; having experienc'd what a strong and irresistible Influence a good Turn, done generously, has had on very profligate Persons. *Read on this Head, Matt. xviii. 17. Gal. v. 12.*

42 Yet still strove with to be gain'd.

20. If any under my Care, after all proper Methods used, remain open impenitent Sinners, when and wherever I meet such, 'tis my Intention flatly to tell them of their sad and deplorable Condition: As, "Oh, Sir! how can you sleep, or be at Ease, amidst such dreadful Danger? I cannot forbear telling you, That if you die such as you now are, you are undone for ever, &c." Who knows but such plain Dealing may fright and startle a Man out of his Sins. Thus St. Paul chargeth Timothy to be instant with his Flock in Season, and out of Season, (that is, on extraordinary Occasions,) and on such Times to reprove and exhort, 2 Tim. iv. 2.

21. Upon hearing of any Person's falling into a great and scandalous Sin, my Love to his immortal Soul, and Concern for its Safety, will immediately carry me to him. Haste in my Steps, and Concern in my Looks, will convince him that my Charity brought me there, and entire Christian Affection moved me to endeavour his Repentance, and in that his Happiness. I am apt to believe, that were Men told of their Sin soon after 'tis committed, and warn'd by their Pastor earnestly and importunately to repent of and forsake it, that might prevent its growing into an Habit, and be the Means of saving many a laps'd Soul from its utter Ruin. This is an indispensable Branch of the Ministerial Duty. Read Ezek.

Of urging mutual Reproof on the People. 43

Ezek. xxxiii. 3. Acts xx. 31. Coloss. i. 28. and particularly Jude xxiii.

22. Since no Minister can be so vigilant but some Sinners and Sins may escape his Knowledge, which yet his Neighbours and others may be sensible enough of; and since 'tis the Duty of every Christian to warn his transgressing Brother, and not let Sin abide upon him, (*Lev. xix. 17.*) I will often inculcate this upon my People, That they frequently reprove, exhort and confirm one another; loving each other's Souls, and shewing that Love by helping every one his Brother in the Way to Heaven. I will entreat them to watch over one another's Ways with an holy Carefulness. As in worldly Dealings and Affairs, of Importance especially, they advise, caution, and assist each other, so should they in spiritual Concerns, which are of the last Moment. They should enquire into one another's Proficiency in Grace, and provoke each other to the Love and Fear of God. *Christians are enjoin'd mutual reproof. Lev. xix. 17. Psal. cxli. 5. Eph. v. 11. Exhortation, Heb. x. 25. Consolation, 1 Thess. iv. 18. — v. 11.*

23. To promote Piety the more among my People, I will very often visit them in the Evenings, and propose to join with them in their Family-Devotions. By which Means I shall observe their Manner of and Affection in performing them, and by my Presence encour-

44 *Author's Resolution of gaining Separatists.*

rage them to Perseverance in so necessary a Duty of Christianity. *That Christian Families should meet together, and pray to God, we learn from Acts xii. 12. and Ministers should encourage them thereto, 1 Thefl. v. 17. 1 Tim. ii. 8.*

24. To gain their Love the more, and convince them that I decline no Pains to do their Souls good, I resolve to write and publish several religious Treatises for their Use, so that they may have my Instructions and Intreaties by them, to consult at their Pleasure. Among others, I have design'd a Treatise in two Parts: The first referring to their religious Principles and Belief; the other to their Practice in all the Conditions, Offices, and Circumstances of human Life.

25. If there be any Dissenters from the Church of *England* in my Parish, (and I look upon such to be in a very unhappy Condition,) I will leave no Method untry'd to bring them into her Communion: For I look upon myself, as a Son of the Church, to be indispensibly oblig'd to promote her Peace, Reputation, and Increase; and as a sincere Christian, to endeavour the Recovery and Union of all such, as far as it lies in my Power. I have brought over several Dissenters in my present Cure; and, by God's Blessing, hope many more will follow their Example. *Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. i. 10.* *In which last Scripture St. Paul beseeches*

beseeches those among the Corinthians that inclin'd to the Spirit of Schism, not to break the Union of the Church.

26. If there happen any Difference in the Parish, either upon Quarrels, Injuries, or Contention about Goods and Possessions, &c. I will strive all possible Ways to bring about a Reconcilement. In case of Calumny, I will send for both Parties, unknown to each other; and having got what Evidences may be material to prove the Thing Detraction, or not, set the Matter in its true Light, and give Reproof and Advice accordingly; never letting them depart, if that be to be done, till they are reconcil'd, and become Friends. *One of the Beatitudes, nay, one of the most glorious of them, is the promis'd Reward of this Christian Duty. Matt. v. 9. The Peace-Makers are the CHILDREN OF GOD.*

If the Difference be on any very important Account, I will endeavour to be Umpire myself, or, if they will permit it who differ, be at the Pains to get others more skilful in the Affair to be chosen such; nor will I leave any Stone unturn'd, to persuade them to refer their Disputes to a friendly Debate. I will be very diligent to know so much of the Laws of my Country, as may capacitate me to decide such Differences I may happen to be made Umpire of. But if so be that any in my Parish improve into a Law-Suit, I will strive to

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convince the Contenders they ought not on that Account to love one another the less, but quietly, and in Friendship, suffer the Law to decide the Controversy. *Matt. v. 40. 1 Cor. vi. 1, 6. condemn Christians for going to Law for small Matters. Now Christ's Ministers are the Ministers of Peace, and ought to exhort their Flocks thereto.*

27. As I before observ'd, one great Art of performing the ministering Office well consists in searching out Hypocrites, and so endeavouring to convince and reform them. There is no doing this without studying the World, the Customs, and Fallacies of Trade, the Art of Deceit and Imposition therein; and except you know somewhat of Mens worldly Circumstances and Dealings: I have, more than once, been greatly deceiv'd for want of Skill in this Matter. Men have appear'd to me, and all the World, not only just, but pious, who in a little Time have broke or died in Debt more than they were worth, through their Pride, in living above what they could afford. For this Reason, if I find any of my Flock taking such-like unjust and dangerous Courses, I will do all I can to dissuade 'em from them. In so doing I may prevent much Trouble that would fall upon some, and much Danger to others, especially that of dying in Injustice, and with a troubled and distracted Conscience. *Thus, Acts xx. 28.*

Author's Charge to Parishoners in Authority. 47

the Pastors of the Church of Ephesus are strictly commanded to take heed to the Flock of which they were OVERSEERS; a Word which denotes great Care of and Inspection into Mens Souls.

28. Our State in this World being very changeable, and full of Vicissitude of Affairs, I will improve all such to a divine Use. As, supposing a Parishoner has had a sudden Turn of Felicity, or, on the contrary, a great Loss, I will persuade the first to Gratitude to God, and give him a Caution against the dangerous Allurements of the World: The other I'll exhort to Patience and Meekness; and withal, to take occasion from his Experience of the fallible Nature of earthly Things, to draw nigher than ever to God. So on all other Changes of Mens Conditions and Affairs, I propole to give spiritual Instructions proper for them. *Thus St. Paul taught Christians to sanctify Afflictions, Heb. xii. 6, &c. St. James Prosperity, Jam. v. 13.*

29. You know that every Parent, Master, Mistress, Guardian, and such like, are in some measure accountable for the Souls committed to their Charge. Therefore I shall frequently and earnestly entreat such to be constant in the Discharge of this great Duty, the Neglect of which, is dangerous to Youth, and gives way to their vicious Desires and Actions. All that are in Authority have an Awe on those under them, which might be improv'd to a pious
End.

48 *Dealing with poor Men in taking his Dues.*

End. As I resolve, by God's Help to be an exact Example of this pious Care of those under me in my own Family, so I hope to make it become universal throughout the Parish. *All Christians in Authority are to be advis'd to this Duty from Prov. xxii. 6. Eph. vi. 4. Deut. xi. 19.*

30. I will either let out my Tythes, or manage them my self, as I judge 'twill best serve the Cause of Goodness and Piety. If there be a large Glebe, I think it most proper to improve it my self; in that hereby I shall have opportunity to employ the Poor of the Parish, and do them many various good Offices, which will endear me to them, and provoke them to be the more diligent to please God. *This may be done in Imitation of the great Prophet Elisha, who follow'd Husbandry, and no doubt fed the Poor with the Profits of his Labour: This we are sure he did, when he was called to be a Prophet, 1 Kings xix. 19, 20, 21.*

31. I will by no means take any Due; either in Tythe or Money, of any very poor and pious Man; but how much soever I straiten my self, will frankly remit it him. If a Parishoner be poor and wicked, I will be very strict in receiving my Dues: But then, as I see Occasion, or think 'twill work any Good upon him, I will send for him, and with loving Advice give it back to him again. I speak here of Men who are extremely necessitous

Resolutions respecting Magistrates, &c. 49

cessitous, and when what they have to pay comes to small Sums (which yet to remit is a great Charity and Help to them) for otherwise a Minister must be in very good Circumstances to afford the making many such Remittances. However, let my Liberality be more or less, I will take Care (for I think it my Duty so to do) that it shall not prejudice my Successors, by lessening the customary Dues, or otherwise. For I will be sure always to demand my whole Right, though I will not always retain it. *This was St. Paul's Practice, to deny himself the worldly Assistance he might have demanded of his Flock.* Read 2 Cor. xii. 13, 16. 1 Cor. ix. 6, 7, 12.

32. That I may advance Piety in a Parish, as much as I can, I will endeavour my utmost to make the most sensible, the richest, and most powerful Persons therein, Profelytes thereto, especially the Magistrates. To this End, I propose to exhort them to form themselves into a Body, or Society, and meet at Times agreed upon, to consult how the Cause of Religion and Virtue may be best carried on among them; to take Methods of reclaiming the Vicious by their Perswasions and Authority; to raise a Joint Stock wherewith to help the Poor, in Cases of Calamity which the publick Laws have not provided against; as, Losses by Fire, the Bankruptcy of Debtors, Decay of Trade, and such like. In particular, if the Parish be

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50 *The Author's Methods in visiting the Sick.*

rich, and can afford it, I will advise that a Charity-School be erected for such a Number of poor Children as can be maintain'd by them; which great Part of Charity, blessed be God, is become of late frequent in our illuminated, and in that, happy Island. I will animate my People to this Design, by offering as largely as I can towards it, and by shewing them how reputable, nay, and profitable, this great and good Work will be to them and their Posterity, 1 *Tim.* vi. 17, 18, 19.

33. I have experienced, that nothing endears a Minister more to his People, than his Care and Willingness to visit and comfort the Sick: Therefore I have resolved to be very diligent and laborious in this Duty. I have ventured my Life before now on this Occasion, and I am ready to do it again, if call'd thereto. Travelling some Miles in a dark, rainy Night, over craggy Hills, through By-ways, and among many deep and uncover'd Mines (which threaten'd Destruction both to Man and Beast) did not deter me from visiting a poor Man dying a violent Death, by a sudden and lamentable Accident: Nor shall the greatest Danger, I trust, deter me, where I have any Hopes of doing Good to Mens immortal Souls.

I don't mention this to you as an Action of any extraordinary Merit (for I take it to be no more than what I am obliged in Conscience, and by my Office to comply with) but as a
Testi-

Testimony of my Zeal to promote God's Glory, and the Good of his Church, and every Member therein, as far as I am concerned with them; in that I believe, if to lay down my Life to bring about these great Ends would do it, I should not be found wanting in so glorious a Cause.

That I may duly perform this Part of my Office, of visiting and administering spiritual Helps to my People in their Sickness, I resolve to come to them in Time, without expecting the Ceremony of being sent for. If my Visit happen to be unseasonable, I will desire them to send for me at all proper Times.

If the sick Person have led a pious Life, and (as far as Man can judge) was taken ill in a State of Grace, all I have to do, is to comfort such a one with the blessed Consolations of the Gospel of Grace; to encourage him to Patience and Resignation to the divine Will; to repeat the precious Promises of God to him; and, when I perceive him nigh Death, endeavour to help trim his Lamp, just at his going to meet the Bridegroom, that it may burn bright in his Presence, bright with fervent and holy Aspirings. *That this is the Minister's Duty, read* James v. 14. 15. Matth. xxv. 36, 40.

If the Man is poor, I intend, according to my Ability, to do my utmost for his Body, by giving him Cordials, and procuring him necessary Physick. For if he be a good Man, I

shall greatly please God, in shewing such sincere Love to one of his dear Children; and if he be wicked, sure nothing is more likely to win his Heart, than such a Tenderness and Care in the sad Time of Sicknes, which often puts a Man's Mind in a true Light, and makes him relent. So that by my Kindnesses and Entreaties, together with my added Prayers to God, I may be the Means of doing good to his Soul. *Thus shall we imitate, as far as we can, the Apostolical Pastors, who, in their Visits of the Sick, carried holy Oil with them, to which God in those Times gave a miraculous Power of Healing. We may carry common Medicines to the poor sick Christians, and God seeing our charitable Zeal, may give these the same Power of healing secretly, as he did to the holy Oil of old publickly, Jam. v. 14, 15.*

In some extraordinary Cases, where the Person has been long, and exceeding wicked, and the Disease is lingring, I propose to be with him daily; and if it be far from my own House, to abide in his, or some other Person's hard by, for three or four Days together, taking all the Pains and Care I can (as the Exigencies of his Sicknes will permit) to recover his Soul, and gain it to God, by using every spiritual Method and Medicine I can think on.

34. I think it very necessary, that I often advise my People in Time of Health, so to live, that when they are taken sick; they may have

Of pronouncing Absolution on dying Men. 53

have the Guilt of no indulg'd Sin lying upon them; and consequently, that I may be encouraged to give them not only the declarative, but actual Absolution of the Church; which is prescribed in the Office of the Sick, in our Common-Prayer. *By CHRIST's Authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy Sins, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* See the Determination of Christ in this Case, which is very exprefs and full, *John xx. 23. Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: And whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* I believe it is my Duty, to let none go out of the World without it, who are duly qualified to receive it; our Lord Jesus having appointed us his Ministers to pronounce his Absolution upon true Penitents, which he has appointed as one MEAN of their Salvation. *This Power of pronouncing Absolution in the Church is delegated by her to every Parochial Pastor, who saith, or should say the same to every one of his Flock going out the World.*

35. I take habitual Prayer to be absolutely necessary to a State of Grace, and that 'tis a Minister's Duty to do his utmost to learn his People to pray. I speak now of private Devotion, which so many Christians, especially among the Youth, are so wanting and ignorant in. You may remember, I put this Question among those of my Conference with particular

54 *Of teaching the Ignorant to Pray.*

lar Persons Have you learnt to pray to God by your self with Fervency and Delight? If I find they are Strangers to this great Duty, I think my self obliged to instruct them in it, by engaging them frequently to read the Holy Scriptures, and especially the New Testament, and get much of it by Heart; and by kneeling down in their Presence, and shewing them how I my self am used to approach the divine Majesty in all the Parts of Prayer, as Confession, Petition, Praise, and the rest. *Thus the great Pattern of all Pastors, St. Paul, taught the Tyrians in a publick manner to pray, Acts xxi. 5.*

I know, my good Friend, I shall be somewhat singular in this Practice, which perhaps to some may look strange and odd; but really, Sir, I have thoroughly weighed it, and find 'tis necessary to be taken with too many very carnal and ignorant Christians. Multitudes who go by that Name know not how to pray in private to God at all; and many can only pray by a Form, by the Thoughts and Expressions of others. Forms I own to be fittest for publick Devotions; but in private I think every Christian ought to learn to approach God in his own Thoughts and Words. For how can the most judicious and pious Man living judge of my Wants, or Sins, or Mercies, &c. as well as I my self? Therefore I resolve to instruct my People in the best Methods of learning how to *pour out their Souls before God* of themselves, and

Christians to compose their private Prayers. 55

and without the Help of any other than their own Inclinations, the Holy Scriptures, and the blessed Spirit of God. *Pious Hannah is an Example of this Duty, 1 Sam. i. 10. where 'tis said, She was in Bitterness of Soul, and prayed to the Lord, and wept sore, and said ver. 11. O Lord of Hosts, &c. Now Hannah spake in her Heart, only her Lips moved, &c. ver. 13. These were the Thoughts and Compositions of her own Soul, and not of another's. Thus also King Hezekiah prayed to God in his Sickness, Isa. xxxviii. 2.*

36. All Men who have well studied human Nature confess, that things uncommon and surprising make a great Impression on Mens Minds. I can assert this from my own Experience; and therefore when I shall have Opportunity, I intend to make a proper Use of such Methods. To give an Example: On a fit Season I will send to every Family throughout the Parish, telling them that on such a *Sunday* I entreat as many as can to be at Church, for that I have somewhat extraordinary to impart to them. On which Occasion I will urge some grand Duty upon them, which I see 'em remiss in, or dehort them from some Sin become general in the Parish, or treat of some other such-like important Subject with a more than common Zeal and Earnestness. *Thus earnest was the great St. Paul with the Corinthians, on their conniving at the Sin of the incestuous*
Per-

56 Of surprizing People into Good, &c.

Person, 1 Cor. v. 1. &c. and equally zealous in warning the Galatians on their Defection from the Truth, Gal. iii. 1.

37. In my List of the Souls under my Care, I shall divide them into three Sorts. First, the Pious, or those I think to be in a State of Grace: Secondly, the Profligate, or such as I have Reason to think are under the Curse: Thirdly, those of whose State I am dubious. We are to judge of People from their Words and Actions; for out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh, and what a Man's Soul delighteth in, that, generally will he do. Therefore I shall carefully watch over the Actions and Conversations of my People. Those whom I hear talk profanely or immodestly, that swear or lie commonly, or that live in Injustice, Malice, or any other Sin publicly; such, without Breach of Charity I may judge to be unregenerate; as those whose Words and Works are pious and just, I conclude to be in the Favour of God. With each of these I propose to deal according to their several Conditions. According to the Direction of the Holy Spirit by St. Jude. Of some, saith he, have Compassion, making a Difference; and others save with Fear, pulling them out of the Fire, Jude xxii. 23.

38. Those who by no means are capable of being taught to read, I shall be very pressing on, to come constantly to Church (if it may be,

be, not omitting one Sunday,) and hear the publick Word; since they are so unhappy as not to be able to consult the Scriptures at home, and in their private Retirements. *Thus holy Anna was constant to her Devotions in the Temple of God, where the Law was read and expounded, Luke i. And thus the Apostles and primitive Christians were continually meeting together at all Opportunities, to hear the Word, and worship God publickly, Acts i. 14. ii. 42.*

39. Forasmuch as Ability in worldly Things begets Respect among irreligious Men, I will strive by all honest and industrious Means to attain to a handsome Competency, that thereby I may have the greater Influence upon them for their Souls Good. One chief Way to be wealthy, is to be frugal: Therefore tho' I am resolv'd to be very liberal to the Poor, yet to others I shall deal with a sparing Hand; herein observing that Precept of our Lord Jesus, not, for the most part, (as the Way of the World is) to call the Great and the Rich, but the Poor, the Maim'd, and the Blind, to partake of my good Things, who cannot repay me again, but refer me to the last and great Day of Retribution for a Recompence, from the unmeasur'd Bounty of an all-gracious God. *Matt. xxv. 34. Heb. vi. 10.*

40. Those which I have practis'd my self, and such as I find useful and convenient of spiritual Exercises, I will advise my People to al-

58 *Young Christians come to Years of Discretion,*

so: As, in particular, to set a-part a Day after they are come to the Age of Reason, in which to renew their Baptismal Vow, and consecrate themselves afresh to God. I will advise that this be done not in Word only, but that those who can write, actually draw a Form of Covenant betwixt God and themselves, in the Nature of that which they made at Baptism, setting their Hand and Seal thereto. That they keep this always about them, so that in Time of Temptation they may recur to it for Strength and Encouragement. Which Covenant may consist of the following chief Articles: THAT being come to their Reason, they apprehend and confess the Almighty Lord God, acknowledging him to be that all-glorious and perfect Original of Being, to whom they owe chief Allegiance and Subjection. — That they believe in their Saviour Jesus Christ, and in his inestimable Work of Love, the Redemption. — That therefore, they this Day renew their Covenant to serve God, made in their Infancy, and with all their Spirits give themselves up for ever to his holy Will. — That they humbly accept of all God's gracious Promises of Pardon and Holiness here, and eternal Life hereafter. — That they utterly renounce all Sin as odious to God; but yet that they except, in the Name of their Mediator Jesus, that if they do fall into sudden Acts of Disobedience through Weakness,
Sur-

Surprize, or even Wilfulness, on some extraordinary strong Temptation, (and that against the main Drift of their Lives, and Bent of their Wills in the general.) — That this shall not null this solemn Engagement with God, but that an immediate and sincere Repentance shall through Christ continue them in it. *Thus the Patriarch Jacob, when young, made a Covenant with God, Gen. xxviii. 20.*

THESE and SUCH-LIKE shall be the Contents of this Form of Agreement, which I intend to draw up with the greatest Solemnity and Weight of Expression I can devise, and then recommend it to their Use and Practice, as upon all Occasions, so especially at the Time of their Confirmation by the Bishop, or their going to the Communion.

41. Among my other private Instructions, I will advise the more intelligent Sort of my Parish, to keep an exact Account of their Lives, as far as they respect Religion. That they make a Book, and at Night set down the Miscarriages of the Day, asking God's Forgiveness for them. That every *Saturday* Evening they look over that Week's Account, and grieve or rejoice before God according to their Decrease or Increase in Grace. That against the Sacrament they renew the Account kept since the last Time they receiv'd. And lastly, that every Year (and as most proper on or nigh their Birth-Day) they solemnly and carefully

60 *Christians to keep daily Account of their Lives,*
research the whole for the Year past. Thus
will they be able to judge of their spiritual
Estate, and their Progress in Piety, their most
common Failings, and the Occasions of them.
And hereby they will be so accusom'd to
guard against Sin, that in Time they may
become great Saints, and arrive to the high-
est Pitch of Christian Perfection in this Life.
*David speaks in many Places, as if he took some
such very particular Care of his Steps in Life,*
Psal. xxxix. i. cxix. 59. *And holy Job telleth
us, That God marketh all our Paths, i. e. all
our Thoughts and Actions, sure then we should
take some account of them our selves,* Job xxxiii. 11.

There are innumerable other Ways and
Methods, my honour'd Friend, which I have
no room to insert here, (and indeed, which
cannot be put into any Form or Order of Ex-
pression,) which the various and unforeseen
Circumstances, Qualities, and Changes of a
Parish will offer to my Practice. But I have
here inserted as many as I thought would give
you a just Idea of the Sense I have of the
Ministerial Duty, in that Part which respects
my private Dealings and Conversation with
my People. I go on to give you an Ac-
count;

III. Of my PUBLICK CHURCH DUTIES and OFFICES, as a Minister of the Gospel, and Pastor of Mens Souls.

These are principally Seven:

First, PREACHING.

Secondly, PRAYER.

Thirdly, PRAISE.

Fourthly, CATECHISING.

Fifthly, DISCIPLINE.

Sixthly, DUTIES OF BAPTISM, BURIAL, &c.
And

Lastly, CARE OF THE MATERIAL PLACE OF GOD'S WORSHIP.

First, Of PREACHING. This is a great Mean of Salvation; and, next to the private and personal Inspection into Mens Souls, the chief: Therefore I shall bend all my Might towards the performing it well. In which Attempt I will follow these Rules:

1. I preach with Boldness and Authority. I do not read Sermons, but utter them, I hope, with a due *Emphasis*, as the very Word of God, and the Embassy of my Sovereign Christ. I speak not as in my own Person, but his. As I am not for fantastic and theatrical Action and Flights in a Pulpit, so I cannot but dislike that
laxe,

laxe, cool, and negligent Manner of delivering themselves used by some Preachers, who shew no Concern in the Exercise of their Duty. How can these affect others, when they don't seem in the least affected themselves? *Thus our Lord himself taught, not of common Course, as the Scribes, but with Power and Authority, Matth. vii. 29. And so, after his Example, the Apostles; as the Jews their Enemies perceived. For when they saw the Boldness of Peter and John in preaching the Word, they took Knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus, Acts xli. 13. Two of Christ's Apostles were Boanerges, or Sons of Thunder, Mark iii. 17.*

2. As I see occasion, I temper this Earnestness with soft and mild Expressions; and when I speak in Reference to my self as the Preacher, with all Humility and Condescension: When I treat of the divine Mercies and Mysteries, my Style is sublime: When I exhort to Moral Duties, 'tis with Affection and Concern, &c. *Gal. vi. 1. Tit. iii. 2. Matth. xi. 28, 29. Here, saith our Saviour, learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of Heart. Come to me all ye that labour, and I will give you rest.*

3. I generally divide my Discourses into Parts Theoretic and Practic: Those to entertain the Fancy and Judgments of the Auditory, these to perfect their Morals and Piety. I have experienced, that when Men have been pleased with the nice Exposition, and critical Obser-

Of delivering the whole Will of God. 63

Observations on a Text, they have hearken'd to the Moral and Spiritual Deductions from it with much greater Willingness and Delight. Therefore I am as curious as I can in the *Credenda* and *Intelligenda*, as I am pressing to the *Agenda* of Religion: Which being the most necessary Part I principally drive at. *Christ's Ministers are made the Stewards and Dispensers of his Mysteries*, 1 Cor. iv. 1. and also are to inculcate all plain moral Duties on their Flocks, Eph. ii. 10, 11. 1 Tim. vi. 2:

4. I have compos'd (and preach'd in my present Cure) a good Part of a general System of the Christian Religion, which I intend, as I have Time, to finish, and go through when I am fixed. It begins with the Creation, the Origin of Sin, the Nature of the Christian Covenant, of Baptism, and the Sacrament; and goes on to the Incarnation and Sacrifice of Christ, with his Resurrection, Ascension, and Mediation in Heaven: All which are speculative Parts of Divinity. Then it proceeds to the practical; as, the Duties of the Two Tables, with their Evangelical Improvements; and is to end with the four last Things, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell. I intended this, because I would leave the People no Room for Ignorance in any Part of Religion. And that they might have the whole Counsel of God laid before them, not in broken Pieces, but in a Chain of consequential Doctrines, depending on each other.

64 Of adapting Discourses to Hearers.

other. Not that I confine my self to this till 'tis ended, but propose to give them publick Notice, that at such and such Times I intend to advance in my general System, entreating them not to be absent. See Acts xx. 27.

5. I make Choice of Subjects for my Discourse, not according to my own Fancy, but the present Temper and Conditions of the People from Time to Time. *Above all, I shall have Regard in my Preaching to the pure Articles of the Christian Faith, and urge them against all Heresies whatever, Tit. i. 10, 11, 13. ii. 7.*

Secondly, Of PRAYER:

1. Prayer and Praise are the most essential Parts of divine Service. Therefore I resolve to be very diligent to get it perform'd aright by my People. To this End, I will take care that they understand all the Parts of our Rubrick and Liturgy; that so they may stand or kneel, be silent or make Responses, as they ought, and be universally regular and decent in their publick Devotions.

2. The bringing every Parishoner to read will be a great Help to general Decency in Devotion; for then every one will know how to join regularly in the Service. It is a great Offence to the Pious, to observe that so many Protestants should be so lazy and indecent as they.

they are in the Service at Church, not at all observing its excellent Orders in divine Worship. Sitting and lolling at Prayers are Postures the very *Papists* and *Turks* are ashamed of. I think it would much promote publick Devotion, and in that Piety too, if there were no such Thing as an inclos'd Seat in any Church in our Nation, but that all should be open, and, except for Magistrates, without any Marks of Distinction. Thus 'tis in most *Roman* Catholick Countries, and, as I think, a very commendable Practice. I have been Eye-witness of the Neatness and Regularity of the *Papists* in their publick Devotions, and also of their great Zeal and Fervency thereat. Whatever their Principles and Practices are, I am sure in this they shame many of our Congregations, who are very negligent, not to say stupid and irreverent in the Church. It is a Grief to think that a corrupt and idolatrous Communion should observe more Decency, and better Order in publick Devotion, than the purest and most evangelical in the Christian World. I am resolv'd, whatever others do in respect of theirs, never to let this be an Imputation on my People. I have greatly reform'd those I am now with from these Disorders, which most Country Congregations are corrupted with. I will never suffer any lusty Persons impudently to presume to pray to God sitting or lolling: All who are able

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shall stand or kneel. It is a lovely Sight, to behold a numerous Assembly of Christians all on their bended Knees, supplicating God.

3. To help forward the Congregation's Devotion at Prayers, I read them with all the Gravity, Fervency, and Distinction I can. Generally I stop a little between each Prayer, that the People may have some Time to let loose their Thoughts, and collect them again on the next Petition with the greater Vigour.

4. I teach them to suit their spiritual Meditations and Passions to the several Parts of the Liturgy; as, of Grief and Sorrow at the Confession, humble Faith at the Absolution, Joy in the Praises, &c.

Thirdly, Of PRAISE. Praise to God is the sublimest Part of religious Worship, being that which elevates and gladdens our Hearts most, and most resembles the Homage paid by the Angels and Saints in their divine Elogies to the Supreme Majesty in Heaven. That this Duty may be perform'd as devoutly and divinely as is possible here, I intend to endeavour that all the People who can, may constantly join in the Psalms of Praise sung in our Churches. St. *Ferome* affirms, that in his Time the very *Amen's* of the Christian Congregations were like loud Thunder-Claps; so zealous and fervent were the antient Christians

Standing the proper Posture of Praise. 67

tians at their Devotions. And so I wish those of the present Age were; and particularly, that in God's Praises Men would be uniform and devout.

The Clerk's reading the Psalm Verse by Verse in our Churches, is an Interruption of the vocal Musick therein, and a Blemish to it. Now, if, as I propose, all or most of my Parish be taught to read, there will be little or no occasion for the Clerk to do so at that Time; so that there will be a pleasant and continued Harmony. Again, I think standing the most proper Posture for Praise, therefore I have brought most of my present Parish to observe it.

It is delectable to view a Multitude of Christians all standing, and, with the upright Countenances God gave them, singing the devout Praises of his amiable Perfections. I resolve to have the best Singing in my Church: There shall be a due Number taught the Tenour and Base Parts, that the Treble may be the more pleasant, and the several Voices have their distinct Harmonies.

I am a Lover of Musick my self, and so are most Men: Therefore to attract them by this to the Love of the publick Service, besides the common Tunes, I design to have Anthems sung by a select Choir; which, if by any Means I can, I will form in my Parish. These Anthems I propose to have sung (be-

68 *Methods for good Singing in Churches.*

sides *Sundays*, on all *Saints Days*, and on the three great *Festivals*. To bring this Design about, I will take care that a competent Number of the poor Youth be taught Church-singing. They shall learn some of our Cathedral Anthems, which I will make use of. And here I cannot but observe how greatly I have been pleas'd in several foreign Protestant Countries, and particularly in *Sweden* and *Denmark*, to find their great Care in bringing up all sorts of People from their Youth to sing the *Psalms* and *Anthems* of their Churches readily and tuneably. They have admirable Hymns compos'd on the several Feasts of the Church, as the *Nativity*, *Ascension of Christ*, the *Pentecost*, &c. and these are sung among them very well. Reading of a Psalm to be sung, would appear ridiculous to these well-instructed People in religious Discipline.

But to return: I wish I may be able to bring good Musick into the Church I am set over, and make it generally useful and esteem'd; in that I am persuas'd this will bring many to Church who stay from it: And who knows but, as pious *Herbert* sings, in a different Sense,

*A * PSALM may catch him, who a Sermon flies;
And turn Delight into a Sacrifice.*

• 'Tis in the Original, a VERSE.

Thus

Thus much concerning Christians Behaviour in the Church; it being the Pastor's Charge to see that God be worshipped in publick Assemblies in all holy Decency and Order, 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

Fourthly, Of CATECHISING.

1. This Church-Duty is of great Importance: The taking care to sow the Seeds of Piety in Youth, is the first Foundation of increasing true Religion in a Parish; for which Reason I catechize the Children every Sunday in the Year: The lesser sort in the Church Catechism only, and the bigger with the Addition of Scripture Proofs and Expositions. That which I use at present is Mr. Lewis (Minister of Margate in Kent) his Paraphrase upon our excellent Catechism, call'd, *The Christian Covenant*.

2. I intend farther, when settled, if my Diocesan approve thereof, to learn the Youths Portions of Scripture, to be rehears'd every Wednesday and Friday after Prayers in the Church; so that before they leave off, they shall run through the whole New Testament, and some select Chapters of the Old, which are of the most excellent Reading. By this means, when they come to be Men, they will have most of the Scriptures by heart: Those Fountains of Life will flow in plentifully upon them.

This

70 *Of enriching the People's Minds in Scriptures.*

This will beget in them a Love to the Word of God, and they'll thereby lay up a noble Stock of divine Learning, both for their own Use, and the Instruction of their Children and Families. And to the end that when they are grown to Maturity, they may understand with their Judgments what they retain in their Memories, I will get some Book of Annotations on the Bible for them, such as Mr. *Burkitt's*, or the like plain Illustrations.

No Parishioner, whom I count fit to have one of these, and is not able to procure it, if I am able to purchase him one, shall go without it. *Deut. vi. 6, 7. John v. 39. The Word of Christ is to dwell richly in Christians in all Wisdom; not only to be read by them, but dwell in them, that is, in their Memory, Col. iii. 16.*

3. I will give a strict Charge to all School-Masters and Mistresses that may be in the Parish, to take great Care of the Behaviour, Morals, and Learning of the Children committed to them, and that they ground them in the true Principles of Piety and Virtue.

Fifthly, Of CHURCH DISCIPLINE. Nothing weakens the Cause of Piety in the Church more than the lessening its Authority in Discipline. This we of the Church of *England* learn from our own sad Experience: The Ecclesiastical Laws are become *bruta fulmina*,
and

and Excommunication a meer Bugbear to many. This is owing partly to corrupt Officers, that execute that part of Church Discipline; but chiefly to those who dissent from us: For the Liberty of coming off for Money, and with Commutation of Penance, and of withdrawing to another Communion, are the Causes why many despise and ridicule our Power of Excommunication, and the Manner of executing it. However, what Branches of Discipline are left upon our Stock, I propose to improve to my utmost. As,

1st, The bringing those to Penance, or upon their Contumacy to Excommunication, who have scandaliz'd the Church, or persist so to do. And I will use all my Care and Interest that no pecuniary Mulct may be taken in our spiritual Courts, but that obstinate and impudent Offenders be brought to publick Shame; that though their Persons suffer, their Souls may be spared in the Day of the Lord, and others in the mean time terrified from Sin by their Example. 2 Cor. ii. 6.

2^{dly}, Another Branch of Discipline concerns the holy Communion: 1. Ministers are to give Notice to their Ordinary of all that do not receive it, at least once a Year, viz. at *Easter*. This I intend to observe carefully; but then it shall be after I have prepared, or endeavour'd to prepare all my Parish for the
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72 *Manner of admitting Men to Communion.*

the pious Reception of it. 2. The Dissenters mightily complain of our Negligence concerning Sacramental Preparations: In Country Parishes, indeed, 'tis inexcusable if the Priest don't carefully see, as far as he can, that every Communicant be duly prepar'd; but in large Towns and Cities, in *London* especially, this is hardly practicable: However, I'll use all imaginable Caution, where-soever I am placed, that none but the pious or truly penitent partake of the Body and Blood of Christ. And because the greatest Danger of Unpreparedness may be in the younger Sort, I determine, as I observ'd before, to have the Catechumens and Candidates for the Communion instructed at my own House. I will compose a small Treatise for their Preparation and consequent Resolutions: I will examine their Faith and Morals; and they shall go through a Course of one Year's Tryal and Instructions before they are admitted to the holy Table; according to the pious Discipline of the Ministers of the Principality of *Neufchatel* and *Valagin*, and, as I have heard, of several in our Church in several Counties, to the great Promotion of Piety. *That Pastors are duly to prepare the People for Communion with God in holy Things, the very Law teacheth us, 1 Sam. xvi. 5. and more expressly 2 Chron. xxx. 17. and the Gospel, Acts xxi. 26. 1 Cor. xi. 17, 28.* 3. Ministers are by no means

means to admit known Sinners, that persist in Wickedness, to the Communion. I will refuse all such, of what Quality soever; and I will strictly observe that Injunction of the Rubrick, which requires those who intend to communicate to send in their Names some time before. 4. We are to present those who live in any notorious Sin, particularly that of Uncharitableness: Those who will not be reconciled to such as, going to the Communion, are so to them, I will not by any means excuse. After I have brought my People to a compleat Pitch of Piety, I will endeavour to establish Monthly Communions among them. 5. That I may put the Ecclesiastical Discipline in due Execution, and advance the Cause of Piety the more in many other Respects, I will take care to chuse none Church-Wardens but those who are pious and zealous for God's Glory; such as will impartially reprove and present Offenders, will help to bear some part of my Burden, which it is their Office to do, and assist me in all my strenuous Endeavours for Religion, by informing me of all vicious Livers in the Parish, and standing up with me for God and the Church's Honour, and the everlasting Good of Mens Souls. Particularly, as Mens keeping or not keeping constant to their Church, and behaving themselves well or ill in it, is a great Sign of their spiritual Condition, either for good or bad, I resolve to get the Church-Wardens, or

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74 *Methods of keeping People to their Church.*

some other religious Persons, to observe who comes to Church duly, and who not; who are decent and pious there (as to outward Appearance) and who not. Due Care shall be taken to admonish those who neglect the Church; for I will observe how often they miss, (suppose in a Quarter or Half a Year,) and then send for them, or otherwise expostulate this their Fault with them. As to those who are indevout in the Church, I must deal with them as unregenerate Persons, still in their State of Carnality and Wrath. Two Faults I will be sure to take notice of: First, the coming late at Church, after the Confession and Absolution are over, which are principal and most necessary Parts of the Service; and then of Men's talking of Business and worldly Concerns in the Church-Yard immediately before and after Divine Duty, which, to say no worse of it, is a very great Indiscretion.

Sixthly, Of the common PUBLICK DUTIES, as BAPTISM, BURIAL, &c.

1. Being resolv'd to improve every Church-Duty for the Good of my People, I intend either to preach *gratis* at every Baptism, or else to prepare a Present of a few written Instructions and Congratulations for the Parents and Friends; charging the former with the Soul of their Infant, that they dedicate it to God,
and

Duties relating to Baptisms, Marriages, &c. 75

and congratulating their Happiness in being Parents of a Child devoted to Christ, and an Inheritor of his heavenly Kingdom, &c.

2. At Burials 'tis my common Practice, when at the House to talk of pious Subjects, and particularly of a Preparation for Death; and I intend to signalize my Love to poor Men who have lived holy Lives, in giving them a funeral Sermon freely, mourning for their Loss, and celebrating their Praises before all the People, in order to enhaunce the Value of Piety among them, and advance the Glory of God thereby.

3. At Marriages I intend also to write a congratulatory Letter, with some religious Instructions, in a pleasant Style; shewing how Men are to marry in the Lord, thereby to advance their spiritual Interest, as well as temporal; and that the chief End of Man and Woman's coming together ought to be the better to serve and please Almighty God, and render their Love immortal with him in Heaven.

Seventhly, Of the MATERIAL PLACE OF WORSHIP, and my Duties in respect thereof.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of God, to see that the Parish-Church be kept in good Repair, and very decent and neat. If the Parish decline to beautify and adorn it when it wants,

76 *Of beautifying Parochial Churches.*

I will contribute as largely as I can, to provoke them thereto. It shall be my earnest Endeavour to entreat Men to contribute freely and generously to the Adornment of God's Church: If the Parish be rich, I will exhort them to contribute to the Maintenance of publick Musick therein; and if ever it pleases God to send me Riches, I will assuredly give largely of them to this Use. The Papists distinguish themselves much in sparing no Cost to adorn their Churches: Shall we Protestants come short of them in Elegancy of publick Worship, who so far exceed them in Purity of Doctrine, Belief, and, I hope, Holiness of Life?

2. I will take care, in particular, that the Belfry be separated from the rest of the Church by some Rails, or other Inclosure: For to let it be open, is often the Cause of much Profanation and Rudeness in the Church.

3. I will not allow of any publick School to be kept in the Parish-Church; which, besides the Damage it often does the Building, gives the Boys a vulgar and disrespectful Notion of it (if God's Grace don't alter them) all their Lives Time after, in that it used to be their Place of Sport and Play.

4. Nor shall any one at any Time be suffered to talk aloud in the Church of worldly Affairs, wear their Hat in it, or, in any respect, use it as a common Building. Our Lord Jesus was very zealous for the material *Jewish* Temple:

Temple: One End of which, in my Opinion, was our Imitation of treating the Place dedicated to God's Worship with all Respect and Veneration. See Mark xi. 15, 16.

And now, worthy Sir, I have finished my Task, and laid before you the chief of my Designs in relation to the Cure of Souls, only adding these four to them.

1. That since the Work is great, and my Abilities but small, and that 'tis possible I may flag in my propos'd Industry in my Office, (which yet I humbly hope I shall not,) I propose, if my Income will maintain it, to have an Assistant to help me, to whom I will commit the common and less arduous Duties, reserving the most labourious for my self.

2. That prejudging I shall meet with Difficulties and Discouragements, nay Abuses and Affronts from wicked Men, for my great Zeal for God, and Hatred of the Vices they love; I am fully determin'd, by his assisting Grace, manfully to go on, maugre them all; to be brave in the Cause of God, and not to flinch, though never so many should oppose me. For I trust in his Strength, that I am ready to lay down my Life, if call'd to it, for my Lord Jesus; certainly then I shall be able to cope with less Ills and Injuries.

3. That I propose to communicate all these Designs to my Diocesan, and crave his Advice
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78 *Great Deference due to Bishops.*

in the Discharge of them, as also his Protection, if I should happen to be opposed, and his Encouragement in these my fervent Desires and Attempts to promote Piety, and the Interests of the Church; offering his Lordship, if he pleases to accept thereof, an Annual, or Triennial Account of my Labours, and their Success: With a List of those Persons I have been the Means of bringing to God. By which Method I propose to my self the Advantage of being kept strict to my Duty, out of an Emulation to approve my self to my Father in Christ, and of the most venerable Order in his Church.

4. I resolve, as little as may be, to intermeddle with Politicks, Parties, or any Affairs relating to the State (which I take to be beside my Office of Guardian of Mens spiritual Concerns) except my preaching Loyalty to the King, and Fidelity to the Nation, at proper Times, may be called such.

I know, Sir, that you understand Men and the World exactly well, and therefore I would not have offer'd these uncommon Thoughts and Propositions to your View, had I not known you also to be one who greatly fears and loves Almighty God; for with Worldlings they may seem foolish and impracticable. But you know divine Love enables a Man to do all Things that are possible; nay, and those which to the carnal-minded may seem impossible, for
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True Lovers of God the only fit Judges. 79

his lov'd Saviour's sake. Were I not sensible you have felt this sacred Passion your self (I believe in its highest Degree) and known its most powerful Effects, I would not have propos'd such a Scheme of Action as this to you ; which, I say, to Men Strangers thereto, might seem romantick, and of an *Utopian* Nature. For the Truth is, if I do all I here propose (and yet my Heart suggests many other unwritten Resolutions) I must resolve to give up my whole Time to God, and the spiritual Interests of my People. I must watch often Day and Night, sit up early and late, be a Hermit to the World, (though not withdrawn from it,) that is, to its Maxims, Cares, and Pleasures. I must bear all Reproaches, go through all Difficulties, be strong to Labour, make the Ministry my whole Employ, as much as the Miser does the getting of Money, or the Ambitious Man his Honours and Preferments. And truly, if I am as laborious and indefatigable in that Labour, as some Men are in Pursuit of the Interests and Pleasures of the World, I shall do every Tittle of what I have laid before you, and more. I am sensible, that if I do so, I can never rise to any Eminency in the Church ; for I shall have no Time to acquire much of that abstruse and speculative Learning, which gets Men a great Name in the learned World, and raises some to the highest Ecclesiastical Dignities. For my
Part,

80 *Of these Rules and Resolutions.*

Part, I prefer the doing my Duty well in a Parochial Trust, in an ordinary and obscure Station, to any other whatsoever; and so I can but get the Favour of Almighty God, and the Conscientiousness of having done my Duty well in my Station; I am not solicitous what that may be, but leave it entirely to the divine Wisdom and Goodness: Above all, beseeching that Goodness to give me the Grace to be faithful therein. For I know there lieth a great Charge upon me when I became a Pastor of Souls. Those Words in *Ezekiel*, so often repeated, *His Blood will I require at thine Hand*, are severe enough to make the most strict and pious Watchman of Souls tremble. You, who are so great a Proficient in divine Knowledge, are sensible, that the Worth of one immortal Soul exceeds that of the whole material World. What a dreadful Punishment then, think you, will the Hireling have, that presides over the Sheep for Wages, and watcheth them not? Who speaketh a few empty Words to them, and that's all; but does not vigorously strive to keep them from the Wolf, and so bring them safe to Christ? No! but basely letteth them be devoured by the Enemy. If the Lord foresee, that if I have a Charge of Christians upon me, I shall be so base, so perjur'd a Wretch both to him and them, I beseech him from my Soul he may never permit it, but deal otherwise, and in Mercy with me.

Now,

Divine Love the best Motive to our Duty. 81

Now, if the Sense of my Duty, and the Danger of neglecting it, make so strong an Impression on me, (to end this Discourse as I began it,) what must the Love of my dear Lord, think you, do? O that Love! that divine Love! what an Irresistible Force it carries with it! I consider, if God so loved me in my Redemption, as to give me the Earnest of an eternal happy Existence, (a Bounty as infinite in Duration as its Donor,) how must I of Necessity love him; of Force, of Gratitude love him? Then again, if I consider his Self-Excellency, how does that attract Love? Methinks I see God in the Centre, as the Spirit of all Being, darting forth his Beauties round in the Circumference; the Circumference (if I may so speak) of infinite Space. Can I chuse but love thee! love thee above all! O thou consummate Beauty! when casting my Eyes every way I see in all Creatures Amiabilities that come from thee! How lovely then, past all human Imagination now, must thy essential Spirit be! In these Thoughts, my lov'd Friend, I wish, I long to be with God. But I must stay his Leisure, and his appointed Time; till when, shall I not spend my whole Soul, Life, and Strength, to please my Love? Can Labours be hard, Disappointments fretting, worldly Fears dismaying, or carnal forbidden Pleasures victorious, when I feel such a Love for

M the

32 *Divine Love over-comes all Difficulties.*

the God of my Life and Bliss! No! by the Grace of Christ, I resolve that nothing created shall separate me from him the All-perfect Uncreate. Consequently, the whole of my Business must be, if this Love perseveres, to preserve my Soul a Sacrifice to God, and besides, bring him as many holy Victims as I can. Sure if I have such a Zeal for the Safety of others Souls, I must be vigilant to preserve my own. Accordingly, I resolve still to be brightening my Lamp, to pour in Oil, and go fast, very fast to meet the divine Bridegroom. And shall I not strive to carry many with me? My Heart tells me I shall; and I hope it suggests the Truth.

Really, Sir, I never saw any Sight that affected my Soul with such great and various Passions, as a large Congregation of Christians from the Pulpit. O! think I, (grieving with the Thought,) how dreadful 'tis to consider, that according to the common way of Mens living, but a few of these can be saved. And then again, O how blessed a thing 'twould be, if they were all Heirs of eternal Life. And if I could be the Means of converting such a Number as this, were I to spend every Hour of my Life in labouring for it, I should be inferior in Dignity and Worth to the Task. You know I have endeavoured to do many uncommon things towards the Advancement of Piety

ty and Virtue, in the poor Station I am now in: Yet I must confess I come short of what I could have done. But I propose to my self, that when I am fix'd, have a Cure properly my own, and Ability and Authority among them, that then I shall exert my very utmost in all the Resolutions I have laid before you.

I confess it my Duty, to make some Apology for this troubling you with Concerns which relate chiefly to my self; and for entreating your Judgment upon the whole I have offer'd, with your added Advice and Instructions: And I should do it, but that I know, ~~you~~ you would take it ill; for your Friendship is of so pure a Nature, that you delight to do all the Offices of it on your Part, and never think you have done enough: But you grow jealous, if your Friend do his Duty, that he is too officious to please. For 'tis your Nature to love to oblige, more than to be obliged; and but to pretend to out-do you in Kindnesses, would be to lose you; which would be as great a Misfortune as could befall me.

Therefore I humbly take my Leave, committing you, my dearest Friend, to the divine Protection; and once more earnestly beseech your Prayers, your persevering Prayers, for my poor Soul, that it may be bound up with the Jewels of the Lord, and, together with yours,

partake of the divine Nature, and the supreme Pleasures of the beatifick Vision to all Eternity.

So prayeth, Good Sir,

Your Affectionate Obliged Friend,

and Humble Servant.



P O S T.



POSTSCRIPT.

I Know any Subject of Piety pleaseth you; therefore I take the Liberty to add this Act of Praise and Prayer which I use in my private Devotions for my self, and my most Dear and Honour'd Brethren of the Church of *England*.

A Prayer for the English CLERGY and PEOPLE.

GOD, Father, Original of the Spirits of all Flesh! blessed be thy Goodness in infusing into me and all Mankind an intellectual Soul, a Spark of thy Divine Perfection. Blessed be thou that it's Nature is immortal,

86 *A Prayer for the English Clergy and People.*

mortal, that Christ redeemed it, and that through him it is ordain'd to eternal Happiness in thy Presence. O, I beseech thy Grace, that I may co-operate with thy Will herein, and dedicate my immortal Part entirely to thee and thy Service. Lord! I am so desirous of the Pleasure of *Intelligence* with thee, that I am willing to renounce all the *sensual* here, which may displease thee. Blessed God, teach me to be moderate in my Affections to this World, and to abhor the Thought of making it my End and Heaven, as corrupt Nature is too apt to do. I long for the Divine Life with thee, my Gracious Lord, and live in the continual Hopes of happily attaining it. O Jesu! I desire to love thee with my whole Soul; and I offer that Soul to thee as a Sacrifice of Love: For thou hast been exceeding gracious to me. Thou hast not only brought me to a Sense of my Sins, and of thy great Love and Mercy, and given me a Will to serve and please thee, but hast conferr'd the greatest Honour on me, I, thy unworthy Creature, was capable of receiving. Thou hast ordained me to serve at thy Altar, and made me a Watchman over the immortal Souls of Men. O Essence of Wisdom and Goodness! inspire me with such a Love for them, that I may lay out my whole Life and Strength for their Good, to bring them unto thee. Give me, I most humbly pray thee, those Graces
of

A Prayer for the English Clergy and People. 87

of thy Divine Spirit that fit Men for the Ministry of thy Son's Gospel. Be with me, gracious Jesu! and give me the Celestial Art of gaining Souls to thee, of turning the Hearts of the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just, of changing the Minds and enlightening the Eyes of all I have the Charge over, who know not thee, their Great, their Chiefest Good. Be gracious to all the Pastors of thy universal Church. O that the whole World were become one Sheep-Fold under the chief Shepherd Christ Jesus! Till when, Dearest Lord, encrease the Number of true Christians. Bless all protestant Ministers, particularly those of the English Church. Grant the Priests of thy Altar Holiness of Life, Purity of Heart, and a constant Zeal for thy Glory and the Interests of their People's Souls. Give them Strength to be indefatigable in their Ministerial Labours, and crown thou those Labours with much Success. O, that there might not be one Worldling or Hireling among them; not one that may live unworthy the sacred Dignity of his Office. Infuse into thy immediate Servants, the Pastors of thy Church, so sincere a Love to thee and it, that they may *do all that lies in them* to save their own Souls, and the Souls of them that hear them. Grant the People Grace to hear thy Holy Word with Joy and sincere Practice; that so both those who minister, and those minister'd unto, may

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may be blessed in their Deed. Be graciously pleas'd to multiply thy Grace upon all Christian Bishops, the chief Rulers of thy Church; especially on all of that venerable Order in our Land, and particularly on our pious Diocesan, and all the Clergy of this Diocese. Finally, have Mercy on me, O my good God; giving me a faithful Heart in my Ministry here, and a Place with the rest of thy Holy ones in Heaven. Grant this, O glorious Godhead, O blessed Diety, Trinity in Unity, thro' the Mediator Jesus, to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, be immortal Glory, both by the Church Militant and Triumphant. *Amen; Amen.*





THE
Author's CHARGE
AT HIS
INDUCTION.

*To the Parishoners of the Parish of Q—g
in the County of L—n, B. H. their
unworthy Pastor, praying God for their
Health and Increase in Grace, wisheth
everlasting Happiness.*

Entirely Beloved in Christ Jesus our Lord!



Count my self happy that God hath
called me to his Service as a Minister
of the Gospel; and exceedingly so that
it is in a Protestant Nation, where the
Knowledge of his Will in its highest Purity is
N taught

taught and learnt; and that in his Providence I am call'd to be the Pastor of a Protestant People; of a People who know the Scriptures, and the Nature of the Gospel preach'd to them.

For You, being thoroughly sensible of the infinite Mercy and Goodness of God to you, of his Love in Christ Jesus, and of the Immortality of your Souls, that they are capable of never-ending Bliss in Heaven, which God, on your Faith and Obedience hath promised, I perswade ~~my~~ self will receive him who hath the Charge over them with open Arms of Love and Affection: Will receive his Instructions, bear his Reproofs, and submit to his Directions, in your spiritual Concerns, with all Candor and Alacrity.

Especially since from the Scriptures you learn how strict the Charge is, God gives the Priests in their Office of watching for Mens Souls; for he appointeth us WATCHMEN over them. We are to guard you, as far as we can, from all Sin. We are to look out, and ken approaching Dangers, and warn you of them. Or if the Enemies of your Souls should have got Hold of any of you; that is, if any Christians are so unhappy as to fall into wilful Sins, we are to warn them of the great Hazard they run. We are to rouse them out of their spiritual Lethargy, and knowing the Terrors of the Lord, strive to perswade them to fly Sin as they would a Serpent, and take hold
of

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of offer'd Grace and Salvation. If we neglect this, if we are so false to God and you, as to suffer Sin to lye unprov'd upon you, and neglect the Safety of your precious Souls, your BLOOD will God require at our Hands, *Ezek.* Chapters iii. and xxxiii. which I entreat you carefully to peruse, and then you'll see how severe a Charge God layeth upon us; then you will not think us officious or troublesome, be we never so exact in performing it.

St. Paul, that best and most careful of Shepherds, under *Jesus* the chief Shepherd of Souls, was very sensible of the Weight and Difficulty of this Office: Therefore he giveth us who succeed him in the Ministry these and such like Commands. "*To watch in all things*, to endure Hardness as good Soldiers of *Jesus Christ*, to make full Proof of our Ministry; to be apt to teach, to be patient and gentle to all Men; to preach the Word, to be instant in Season and out of Season (that is, as it may appear to wicked Men) to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine." These Precepts you may find dispersed throughout his First and Second Epistles to *Timothy*, which, tho' wrote at first to him, relate to us and all the Ministers of the Church to the End of the World.

The OFFICE of endeavouring to reconcile wicked Men to God, of turning them from strong Habits of Sin to Virtue and Piety; of

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being the Guides of Christians, marching before them in the little Army of God's Church in this evil World, where they are surrounded with innumerable Enemies, Dangers, Deceits, and Temptations, and are attack'd continually by them: I say, the OFFICE of guarding and leading Christians on, thus encounter'd and (as Officers in War must do) of being continually on the Watch, in all Places and Times of Danger, encouraging, reprovng, beseeching, threatening, and by all Methods perswading those committed to their Care to behave themselves bravely and valiantly in the difficult and heroic Fight of Faith, cannot but be an Office of very great Moment and Labour.

But then 'tis also a glorious one! 'Tis glorious to turn many to Righteousness, and those that do so shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever, *Dan. xii. 3.* It is richly worth a Minister's while, to toil his whole Life, if he might but convert, and be some Means of saving *one poor Soul only*, whose real Value much exceeds that of all the World. But by the Grace and Blessing of God, his Servants, the Preachers of his Word, may and do convert and turn MANY to him.

Therefore being convinc'd of the Weight, the Worth, the Advantage of becoming a careful and conscientious Pastor, I resolve thro' God's Help and Guiding, so to be among you. For moreover, if the infinite Rewards God
propor-

proposeſeth will not charm me to my Duty, there are threaten'd Woes may well fright me into it. It muſt be a dreadful thing to have the Loſs of Mens immortal Souls laid to the Charge of our Negligence; or for us to deſerve the ſad Character God gave the Priests of his Church in *Ezekiel's* Time, That they did eat the Fat of the Sheep, and cloath'd themſelves with the Wool, but fed not the Sheep. See them ſet farther forth, with a Woe denounced againſt them, *Ezekiel xxxiv.*

Upon all theſe Conſiderations I purpoſe to the beſt of my Power, after having begg'd God's mighty Aſſiſtance, continually and carefully to watch over you, as one that muſt give an Account of you at the Judgment Seat of God, that I may give it *with Joy and not Grief.* To this End

First, I ſhall uſe my utmoſt Skill and Induſtry to preach the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus plainly and earneſtly; not ſo much with worldly Wiſdom and Eloquence of Speech, as in the Power of God. I will carefully ſtrive rightly and ſincerely to divide the Word of Truth; endeavouring by Arguments fetch'd from thence, to keep you all from Sin, ſtrengthen you in all Grace, and encrease your Knowledge in the holy Scriptures; endeavouring by that divine Word throughly to ſearch the Conſciences of All: To convince the ignorant, mollify the harden'd Sinner (if any ſuch

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such be found among you) confirm the Weak, and encourage every one to cast away the Works of Darknes, and put on the Armour of Light and Grace; to live as Pilgrims and Strangers in this evil World, and daily walk with God, expecting an everlasting and far richer Inheritance with him in Heaven.

Secondly, If I perceive this publick Preaching has not its due Effect, but that there are still publick and unreformed Sinners among you, I shall make it my Business, by all Methods of mild and loving Perswasion, first privately to warn and reprove them; and if that avail not, use more Severity; publicly reproving them before All, that others may fear; and so use more Severity according to the spiritual Authority which God giveth his Ministers *for Mens Salvation, and not Destruction.*

Thirdly, I shall be very careful and constant in instructing your Children, and the Youth of your Parish in the Principles of Religion, not only by the publick Catechism, but by excellent Expositions of it wrote by able Divines of our Church, and by other Methods of my own; whereby I intend that they shan't learn things by roat, but have a full Sense and Understanding of the Christian and Protestant Religion, as their Years and Capacities will suffer them.

Fourthly, I propose to take Pains to fit all of you for the holy Sacrament, as far as in me lies, so that you may be worthy Receivers

ceivers of it; and to this End shall set apart proper Times to examine the Youth, and those who may want to be look'd into about their Knowledge in that blessed Duty, and the Preparation required for it: And I shall be strict in remarking the Lives of all those who are to be Communicants as far as respects Virtue and Religion, and admit none to that holy Table, but the innocent, or truly penitent and reform'd, as far as may be judg'd by their known Conversations.

Fifthly, I desire and intend, if I may be permitted, to have frequent private Discourses with every one of you under my Care, that I may judge how 'tis between God and your Souls; whether they are safe, and what your Knowledge in spiritual things is. For unless I know this, how can I give you proper Instructions, or warn you aright? Therefore, if you are not wanting to your selves, I will not be so to you in this respect, of letting you know your spiritual Condition; from the being ignorant of which Thousands of careless Christians perish in their Sins, in the Wrath of God, and in woful Ignorance and Blindness.

Many other Methods, not mentioned here, I propose to my self to advance your spiritual and eternal Good by; in the mean time resolving not to forget to promote your temporal Welfare, and the Interests of your Parish, to the utmost of my poor Ability, by relieving
ing

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ing the Needy and Necessitous among you, and provoking others so to do : By exhorting you to Peace and Love, and on any Differences striving to compose them; with such like kind and good Offices which I conceive a Pastor owes his People. Upon the whole, next to pleasing God, and securing my own Soul, it will be my greatest Joy as well as Care, to get your Love and Esteem, and do you all *the Good in my Power.*

Especially I shall strive to secure you in God's Favour, and fix you in the Knowledge and Love of him. This chief Work shall be my Study early and late; and this, God assisting me with his divine Strength, I will keep strict to as long as I am among you.

For, my dear Friends and Neighbours! whom I dearly love in our Lord Jesus, even as my own Soul, what I now speak to you is out of pure Affection and Desire for your immortal Good; and when I consider that every one of you, as well as my self, must appear one Day, and be judged before God, I am the more earnest to exhort you, and thereby exhort my self also, to walk as becometh the Friends and Disciples of the holy Jesus.

Truly, good Christians! the serious Consideration of the severe and dread Day of Judgment to come, had always, and still hath, a greater Influence on my Soul, and strikes it with a more sensible Dread of the Justice and
Majesty

Majesty of God, than any other religious Consideration whatever. For when I reflect, that on that terrible Day, the Lord Jesus, in all the Pomp and Majesty becoming the Son of God and Judge of Mankind, will bring me to strict Account for a Trust committed to me, of greater Consequence than any other this Side Heaven; it is Matter of much Terror to my Mind, and spurreth me on to to a very strict Discharge of my Ministerial Duty.

If I have been a Lover of the World, and negligent of your Souls, I conceive my heavenly Judge will speak to me **THUS** dreadfully. See, O wicked and false Servant! how basely thou hast betrayed thy heavenly Trust! See what Souls have perished through thy Covetousness, Flattery, Neglect or Dissimulation! O Hireling! who caredst not for my Sheep, but regardedst them not, because thou wert an Hireling, loving the present Wages more than the Good of thy Flock, or thy Master's Approbation and future Reward. Go thou faithless, go cursed Wretch into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.

If I have truly loved and watched your Souls, **THUS** comfortably. Well done good and faithful Servant! Thou hast kept the Faith, and fought the good Fight; thou hast been a careful **WATCHMAN**, and none of my Sheep committed to thee have perished by thy Negligence. Blessed and happy art thou, who hast

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been faithful in a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many: Enter thou into the everlasting Joy of me thy Lord. O happy Sentence! O glorious Approbation of the gracious Judge! Can I ever labour enough to seek for it? Or be my Pains and Care never so fatiguing and great, can they be too many, or too severe to gain so unspeakable an Honour as such an Acquaintance and Applause, given before all God's holy Angels and Saints, and the whole World, will yield?

Nor will God the less accept of you, if in your several Callings and Stations you live honestly and holily, to his Glory, and your Neighbours Edification. The same Reward is laid up for you in Heaven. Therefore I warn, I beseech you earnestly to strive to enter in at the strait Gate. Cast off all your Sins (if you indulge any) be reconciled to God, and take hold of his offer'd Love and Mercy in the Mediator Jesus.

It is your Duty, *Christians*, to help me your Minister, who, though he promises great things, yet may come short of them; nay, it may be, fall into Sin too, if God's mighty Grace don't support him. Therefore, in the first Place, and above all, I beseech your daily Prayers for me, as mine are for you and yours. Moreover, I beg your Practice of the following Duties, whereby you may render my Ministerial Office among you far more easy to me.

First,

First, Search your own Souls impartially: Cast out the Evil, and embrace the Good. Seek after God by earnest Prayer, and strive to become new Creatures: Labour after the new Birth of Faith and Grace. Strive daily to overcome some or other of your Failings, and to encrease in every necessary Virtue and Grace: Such as, Honesty in your Dealings, Diligence, Meekness, Forgiveness, Love, Charity, Faith, and Piety.

Secondly, Be careful and exact in training up your Children in the best Education you can give them; and above all, in the Fear of God, the Knowledge of his Will, and Obedience to it.

Thirdly, Study Peace and Love, and all good Offices of Friendship and Christian Neighbourhood among your selves: Be hard to Anger, easy to Remission. Strive to make up Breaches before they grow too wide, and become remediless.

Fourthly, Make and take all the Opportunities you can to do Good. Be bountiful to the Poor, especially the Pious Poor: Those have the first Right to your Benificence. Remember the Saying of our dear Lord quoted by St. Paul, that 'tis more blessed to give than to receive: And also how he telleth us himself in his Gospels, that at the Day of Judgment he will greatly reward the charitable. Those who fed, visited, cloathed, comforted the

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miserable, those he will then esteem as his best Friends, and their good Deeds as done to himself, because done to the poor and indigent Members of his Body, the Church, whom yet he disdains not to call his Brethren.

Fifthly, Be careful, when there's an Occasion, to rebuke each other. Do not be ashamed openly to confront those who will offend God impudently. Check the bold Swearer, and reprove the immodest Talker. Warn the negligent, who sin of Carelessness; and in every fit Circumstance exhort each other faithfully: Which if you do, you'll greatly help me, and be the Authors of much Good both to your selves and others.

Lastly, Be constant Keepers of your Church, and stedfast Communicants in it. Harken to no Separatists or Hereticks of any kind: If any such attack you, and you can't deal with them, let me know of it. I'll undertake to defend the Church of *England*, or procure some Divine or other better skilled than my self, who shall. Our Church is the best constituted in its Doctrines, Ceremonies and Orders, of any now in the Christian World. Therefore I beseech you, hearken to no Sectaries, who would draw you into Schism, which is a very great Sin, dangerous to your Souls. If there are any among you already fallen off, I will not rest till I have done my utmost to recover them.

Let

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Let no slight Pretences hinder your Attendance on God's publick Service. Remember Christ hath said, *where two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the midst of them, and grant their Request.* Publick are far more efficacious than private Prayers; and congregational is far more excellent than Family Worship. By no means therefore neglect your Church.

And that your Behaviour *there* may be regular, decent, and devout, I beg you diligently to peruse your Common-Prayer-Books at home. You will find them worth the often reading, the *English Service* being one of the most excellent Collections of Prayers ever made by Man since the Times of the Apostles. The Rubrick, or Directory for your Behaviour at Divine Service, is wrote throughout your Prayer-Books in a smaller Letter than the rest, which pray mark and observe. Two other Duties I omitted, which must be as earnestly recommended to you as any of the rest.

First, Your having daily Prayers, and reading of God's Word, at least every Morning and Evening, in your Families. He liveth not like a Christian, who won't call his People together daily to pray to, and praise Almighty God. He is a Reproach to his Religion, and it looks as if he put it on out of Custom on *Sundays* only, and then cast it off for the rest of the *Week*. He who has a Family, and
looks

looks not carefully after the Behaviour of his Children and Servants towards God, will certainly severely reckon for it.

Secondly, I desire you to take all Opportunities to get as many good Books, as you can. The holy Scriptures your Souls must constantly feed upon: You must digest the New Testament thoroughly, and never be weary of reading and retaining it. Also Divines of our Church have wrote innumerable pious Books both to inform the Understandings, and move the Affections of Christian Readers. Some treat of Prayers, and have form'd Devotions for every Day in the Week, and Festival in the Year: These will help your Family and private Devotion. Some Books treat of the holy Sacraments; others of holy Living and Dying: Some of Cases of Conscience: Some again, of difficult Places in Scripture, and others of the Decrees and Attributes of God. It will mightily help you in your Advancement, both in pious Knowledge and Practice, to get as many such of these as you can; in chusing which, if you need it, you shan't want my best Direction.

Thus have I broke my Mind freely, at my Entrance upon my ministerial Office among you; letting you understand before, what I intend to do amongst you, and what I expect from you. To the End, that if afterwards I fail in *any Duty*, in any of *these my Resolutions*
and

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and Promises, you may remind me of them ; which I shan't take ill, but most kindly : And also, that I might encourage you, by my great Concern for your Souls, to watch narrowly after them your selves, and endeavour more and more to please God, and be conform'd to the perfect Example of the *blessed Jesus*.

Accept of these poor Endeavours for your Profit, from your weak tho' willing Minister, who passionately desireth your Salvation. I pray God bless you in all Things ! Lead you by his Grace to the End of this Life, and thence to eternal uninterrupted Bliss, and unfading Glory with him in Heaven. *Amen* I pray God ! To whom be highest Glory and Adoration. *Amen, Amen !*

F I N I S.



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